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THE

Novelists Magazine.

VOL. VII.

CONTAINING

The Fortunate Country Maid,
Louisa Mildmay,
Theodosius and Constantia,
and
Count Fathom.



LONDON:

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1782.

THE

FORTUNATE COUNTRY MAID

OR

Memories of a Maid of the North

BY MISS MARY HARRISON

THE LONDON AND WESTMINSTER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

PRINTED BY T. B. SPENCER



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THE
FORTUNATE COUNTRY MAID;

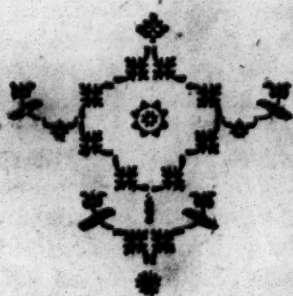
OR,

Memoirs of the Marchionefs of L—V—.

TRANSLATED FROM

THE FRENCH OF THE CHEVALIER DE MOUHY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.



L O N D O N :

Printed for HARRISON and Co. No. 18, Paternoster-Row,

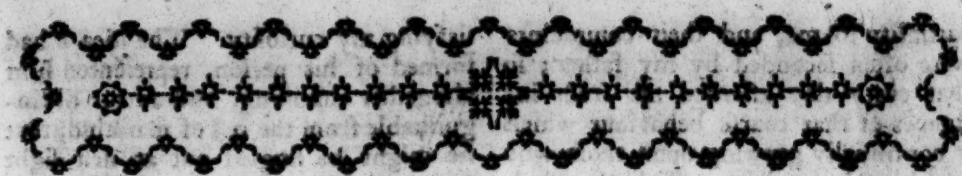
M D C C L X X X I I .

IT is so far from being dangerous, that it is in some sort necessary for young persons to be acquainted with the passion of love, that they may be able to shut their ears against it when it is criminal, and know how to conduct themselves in it when innocent and honourable.

M. HUET,

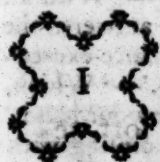
BISHOP of AURANCHES.





THE
FORTUNATE COUNTRY MAID.

VOLUME THE FIRST.



It is with the greatest reluctance imaginable I own my extraction; perhaps by reason of that superior rank I now hold in the world.

On what foundation this vanity is grounded, I cannot determine; but, be that as it will, I confess myself greatly perplexed at my first setting out. Religion, it is true, and proper reflections, have long since convinced me of the absurdity of this weakness; yet still I can scarce persuade myself, that, great as she is at present, the Marchioness of L. V. is, originally, no better than Jane, daughter of John B. wood-cutter in the forest of Fontainebleau.

To so mean a person I owe my origin. My mother waited on the Countess of N. near whose castle stands the hamlet in which I first drew breath. My father was gardener to the count when my mother fell in love with him; and her passion overpowering the lady's remonstrances, who designed her a better provision, she married at all hazards, chusing to run the same fortune with him, which from very indifferent, soon grew much worse; for, leaving his master, a person much respected by his neighbours, in an abrupt manner, he could not get another service, and consequently was obliged to quit his profession. Upon this, he settled in the hamlet I just now mentioned, and took to cleaving of wood in the forest, for the support of himself and family. I was the first fruit of their marriage; and as their mutual affection triumphed over their poverty, my birth, instead of creating any uneasiness, seemed to bespeak them happier days. How far they were

in the right, the sequel of my story must determine.

The countess did them the honour to stand godmother; for it was not long before my mother regained her favour. She went often to the castle, and seldom returned empty-handed; as the lady had formerly made a confidante of her, there might be reasons for keeping up a good understanding.

The Marquis of L. V. who lived in the neighbourhood, was pitched upon by the countess to stand with her.

The ceremony was performed with some pomp; and our family experienced the sweets of the honour done us, in the presents usual on such occasions.

My mother, during the time she waited on the countess, who for the most part lived in Paris, had seen something of the world, which was of singular service in my education. She brought me to an early acquaintance with the reservedness so becoming our sex; often telling me, that virtue and discretion were suitable to every condition of life. She confirmed these precepts with proper examples; the recital of which, being a very agreeable amusement, was often a reward when I had behaved well. Our family increased; a brother and sister, with myself, spent our childhood in doing my father little services in his way of business. The tender constitution of my mother hindered her from going with my father to the forest, whither my brother and sister went every day. I was left at home with my mother; and the hardest labour I underwent was to carry their dinner. This my brother and sister continually resented, as the effect of my mother's par-

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partiality to me, and their complaints were often seconded by my father; so that every day afforded me fresh instances of that coarse behaviour which is continually growing upon those who are placed in low life: possibly the mind, when depressed by want and hard labour, becomes incapable of generous sentiments.

Their ill usage made me very uneasy; at proper opportunities I bemoaned myself to my mother. She comforted me, and directed an offering to be made of what I suffered to God, by whom, she assured me, I should be enabled to bear my afflictions in a proper manner.

Nevertheless, they increased daily; especially as I now began to set some value on my own little person, being turned of thirteen. I was sent one day with cream to her ladyship at the castle; she presented me as her god-daughter to a gentleman very richly dressed. He was so taken with me, that he could not forbear crying out several times, 'Heavens! how handsome she is! She will prove a beauty: what eyes, Madam, when enlivened with love!' — 'Take care what you say,' replied the countess; 'she will too soon become acquainted with things of that nature.' — 'Go, go, Jenny, don't mind him; he says as much to every one he meets.' This put me to the blush; and I was glad to get off, making a very low, but awkward reverence to my godmother.

My head ran very much upon what the fine gentleman (for such I took him to be) had said. 'What can he mean,' thought I to myself, 'by saying my eyes will be, I know not what, when enlivened with love?' This love perplexed me; I fain would have met with it to try its effect on my eyes. Neither simplicity of manners, nor tenderness of age, are proof against vanity: girls are ever apt to think themselves handsome; at least it was always my weakness; and whoever praised my beauty, though I had no other regard for them, were sure to please me.

Returning from the forest one day, whither I had carried some refreshment to my father, I perceived a company of horsemen coming toward me. I drew off to the road-side in order to see them pass. Though I had never seen the king, I had often heard talk of him; and, as I knew he was in the neighbourhood, I was now in hopes of sa-

tisfying my curiosity. The idea I had formed of his person, represented him altogether charming, and so far distinguishable from the rest of mankind, that he might be singled out at first sight from all his attendants. When they came near me, I looked for the king with great earnestness: but the whole company being of the greatest distinction, both as to their persons and dress, I was at a loss; imagining the king, to be sure, must be covered with gold from head to foot. They were almost past me, yet I had not found what so earnestly I sought. Upon this, I ran hastily up to one of the company, crying aloud, 'Sir, shew me the king; I never saw him in my life!' — 'With all my heart, pretty maid!' answered the nobleman, with a countenance exceedingly amiable. 'That is he.' — 'Which, Sir?' cried I. 'Give me your hand,' said the nobleman; then pointing with it, 'That is he who makes so grand an appearance on the white horse.' — 'Yes, yes, it is the king!' cried I, quite transported: 'Good God, how handsome he is! How happy should I be, if he did not go so fast! Oh dear, he is gone already!' My exclamations made him smile; he stopped, and considered me with great attention. 'She is a lovely creature!' said he. 'This unaffected simplicity charms exceedingly, and is infinitely preferable to the studied arts our women put in practice. Can any one behold her without being moved? Where do you live, my pretty dear?' — 'In that village,' answered I, pointing to it. 'Will you give me leave to come and see you?' — 'If it depended, Sir, upon me,' answered I, 'your visit would not be disagreeable; but I am not my own mistress.' — 'Let me alone to contrive it,' replied he; 'you shall have no blame.' Just as he had done speaking, one of the company comes galloping back to him, crying out, 'The king calls for you, marquis; his majesty must know what this girl has been enquiring of you about, and the occasion of her surprize, which she betrayed in such an agreeable manner; the whole court is mightily taken with the simplicity of her behaviour.' — 'I don't wonder at it,' replied the marquis; 'you see what a lovely creature it is; our master ought to give her a gratification; at least I will do what I

can

'can to promote it.'—'So will I,' added the other, looking at me very attentively. 'Where does she live? she is exceeding handsome; I am desperately in love with her.' Saying this, he offered me his hand; but as I would not take any notice of it, he prepared to alight. This put me into such a consternation, that I took to my heels towards the village. 'Stay, stay, pretty maid!' cried the marquis, 'nobody designs you any harm.' I scarce heard these last words, I had made so much haste, never looking back till I was just at home. I then perceived only one horseman at the place I ran from, and it was not long before I discovered the marquis to be the person. I got home full of what had passed, and much taken with the civilities I had received. My mother knew me too well not to be sensible that something extraordinary had happened; she would be acquainted with it, and I very readily told the whole adventure.

'I am willing to excuse your curiosity,' said she, when I had done, 'for his sake who occasioned it; another time be more upon your guard. Not that you were to blame in addressing yourself to the nobleman you speak of, as it was perhaps the only means you had of finding out the king; but for the future look that you never suffer yourself to be dazzled with an empty shew and the discourse of men. As to this nobleman in particular, you never named him but with an unusual emotion. Ah! Jane, Jane! all is not right! You have given your eyes too much liberty; whereas, in regard of men, you ought not to have any. Their praises are justly to be suspected, as they always tend to promote their designs. Remember this. However, it must be acknowledged you acted very prudently in making your escape, when the other nobleman began to importune you.'

A neighbour happening to come in upon us, prevented my making a reply, which increased my uneasiness, and occasioned many reflections; I particularly resolved from that moment to be more upon the reserve with my mother.

Great caution should be used in the education of youth, lest in giving instructions they be taught those things to which they cannot be too great strangers, as it happened in this very case. I had

entirely forgot that the compliments, passed upon me by the courtiers, had created the least satisfaction in my breast; but my mother's admonitions renewed those bewitching ideas, and a new pleasure arose on recalling them to mind. All this was entirely owing to what my mother had said; and my resolving never more to make a confidante of her, was not the least part of the mischief.

I fell into a great perplexity of mind; my usual amusements became insipid, and nothing ran in my head but the gay appearance of the court. Our clownish neighbours, when placed in opposition, created a perfect loathing, though hitherto they had been agreeable enough; particularly a woodmonger's son, who had made some advances towards gaining my affections. Colin, for that was his name, had some share of beauty, was remarkably neater, and more polite, than is usual with those of his rank. He neglected no opportunity of shewing his respect; and as I was very fond of flowers, he often presented me nosegays. His distinguishing me in this manner, though it drew on me the envy of others, was not in the least unacceptable to my vanity: however, I had no sooner seen the marquis, but farewell Colin. I observed this alteration in myself, but my thoughts were then in too great a hurry to perceive the real motive, which nevertheless was not long undiscovered.

Three days were now passed since the adventure, which raised this commotion in my breast. The marquis's expressions were never out of my mind. Young as I was, far from knowing the danger of such reflections, I entertained them with a secret satisfaction; I even repeated to myself his very words, particularly his promise of making me a visit. Upon the least noise, I concluded he was come; and then a childish blush, and fluttering of the heart, were sure to follow to that degree, that oftentimes I was scarce myself.

In fine, four days were elapsed since I met the marquis; when, being at church, I heard some horses stop at the door. Looking back on a sudden, Heavens! who should I see but the marquis himself, entering in such a graceful manner as quite charmed me, and drew the attention of the whole assembly on him. Our eyes soon met; for he presently discovered me, though in
the

the midst of the crowd, and in one look, as I fancied, repeated all that he had said in the forest.

It was evident he must be a person of great distinction, for the vicar immediately sent to invite him into the choir. He was forced to comply; an easy-chair was brought, and the place cleared.

I stared with all the eyes I had, transported with the deference paid to his quality; sure enough, prayers were never said with less attention.

Service was no sooner done, but the marquis retired. In the middle of the church he stopped, and fixing his eye upon me, whispered something to his gentleman, as it proved to be, who also looked at me: then raising his voice as he went out; 'Stay in this village,' says he, 'till my retinue comes up: I intend to dine at the castle; and in the afternoon see what diversion the field affords.'

I was very well pleased to hear how he disposed of himself, and as much concerned at his departure, though I knew not why. My eyes were continually upon him, when at last he took horse with his attendants, the person before-mentioned standing near him; at going off he made me a low bow. The girls who were with me stared upon each other; 'Look now,' says one, 'how complaisant the courtiers are: when do you see our clowns do so?'—'Aye, but,' cried another, 'did you take notice how handsome and genteel he is?'—'Yes,' says a third, 'one would swear his eyes could speak.' Though I said nothing to all this, I did not lose a word of it.

With this kind of discourse we reached home, I often looking behind me, in continual expectation of some new adventure. The answers I made were very incoherent, full as I was of the visit which vanity had placed to my own account. And yet this satisfaction was not a little embittered, when I reflected that the marquis dined at the castle. The countess, it is true, was past her prime, but had charms sufficient to attract the gallantries of a young man; at least jealously presented it in this light.

But all this was pure imagination, and I was soon convinced his designs did not center there. The person he spoke to in the church, had the address to insinuate himself into the company of us girls, as we were chattering together. He had fallen into discourse with one of my companions, so as to be easily

overheard by me. 'How do you divert yourselves on Sundays?' says he. 'Do you dance? or, do you walk about the woods and fields? for these, I take it, are your ordinary amusements.'—'Sometimes the one, sometimes the other,' replied the girl with whom he was talking. 'Indeed, Sir, one would imagine you was born in the country,' added she, 'you seem so well acquainted with the custom of it.'—'It is very true,' says he; 'you are in the right: but since I had the honour to serve my lord marquis, I have buried all relish for the country in the pleasures of a town life. Notwithstanding these fine cloaths, I am country-born as you are; but in the service I am in, I look upon my fortune as good as made, so noble a person is my master. Young as he is, sincerity, discretion, and affability, reign in him; his word is as sure as the day: we meet with few like him.'—'He looks to be such a person,' says the girl. 'How, looks?' replied the gentleman; 'I tell you he never broke his word the least tittle. But I have been very uneasy for him of late. He is grown thoughtful and melancholy on a sudden. What has happened to occasion it, I know not, but he is never out of the saddle now a-days; no longer than yesterday, we scoured the woods and highways from morning till night. I should be very sorry to have him take a dislike to Paris, as it is infinitely preferable to the country both for diversions and company, neither of which is ever wanting there all the day: whereas here one must work from sun-rise to sun-set, and scarce be paid for his labour.' Whilst he talked in this manner, he had in his hand a paper, which, by a sign he made, I easily understood was intended for me. Accordingly, taking a proper opportunity, he gave it unperceived by the company. By my dexterity in securing this billet-doux, one would have imagined, it was not the first I had received by many. I was no sooner withdrawn, but I found myself cruelly disappointed upon breaking open the letter; my mother, it is true, had taught me to read in a book, but I was an utter stranger to all written hand. At first I thought of applying myself to the school-master of the village; but this was running too great a hazard; especially after what had passed between

between my mother and me. There was but one expedient I could devise; the very thought set me a laughing, and for a country girl of fourteen was pleasantly enough contrived.

It was my admirer Colin, who could read and write, that I resolved to employ on this occasion. An opportunity quickly offered itself, though to me it seemed an age, by his waiting upon me with a present of flowers. I received it with greater condescension than usual, and the emotion my intended project occasioned, made every feature in my face appear to an advantage. 'You are killingly handsome to-day, my lovely Jenny,' says he, with an air of satisfaction; 'you sparkle beyond any thing one sees elsewhere; faith, I am continually thinking of you; go where I will, you are always before my eyes. What a shape!' continued he, taking me about the waist. 'Colin, be quiet,' I cried; 'can't you speak, but your hands must be employed? This unmannerly trick of yours spoiled me an apron only last Sunday; I suppose you intend me the same favour to-day.'—'Troth, I am to blame,' answered Colin; 'he that breaks a glass must pay for it, I ought to make you a present of an apron; I shall go to town to-morrow, and will buy some of the same sort.'—'That's not the business at present,' said I, interrupting him, 'you must do me a kindness.'—'I'll do you fifty,' cried he, transported; 'what is it? I'll be quartered to oblige you.'—'Let us get first to that tree,' replied I, 'that we may talk without being observed.'—'What a happy fellow am I!' says Colin. 'Ah, Jenny! indeed, I love you; and now I perceive you begin to make some return. Zookers! if it were once come to that, who knows what may happen? It is true, you have not a groat; but what of that? it is not money that makes people happy: you are pretty, and as fair as alabaster; have eyes like a mouse, and are as straight as a May-pole; that is fortune enough. My father, perhaps, looks one way, and I another. What then? He shall hear reason; or, waunds! I'll go for a soldier.'—'All this,' says I, 'is foreign to what I am going to say. Will you promise me to keep a secret, and not be curious?'—'Well,' answered Colin, 'I see you don't know me: I

would give you my bond, if my word was not as good; witness the other day. I caught, you must know, Matthew's wife and great George in a corner; she made me promise not to tell her husband. Adniggers, there would be fine work, if I could not keep a secret!'—'For that reason,' replied I, 'you are the person I pitched upon in this affair. I must acquaint you, that a friend of mine has received a letter; but as she can't read, she has employed me to know of you the contents, and get an answer wrote, if it be necessary.'—'Let us see, let us see,' said Colin, taking it out of my hand, 'that is soon done. Is it not from the gentleman in red, I saw talking before your door?'—'Right,' answered I, overjoyed to find him in a wrong scent. 'Blews!' added he, 'I am glad on't; I was a little ruffled to see him so busy. I began to think he might have a design upon you.'—'There you would have been quite out,' answered I; 'for he never so much as spoke a single word to me.'—'That I am sensible of,' replied Colin, 'for I took care not to be far off. But let us see, what have we got here? I wish him well, since it is so; other-wise, for all his finery, I would have made him know what it is to tread upon people's heels.' Saying this, he read as follows.

THE MARQUIS OF L. V.'S LETTER
TO JANE B.—

THIS is the only method left me to acquaint you, my charming creature, with the deep impression you made on my heart from the first moment we met. I was in hopes of seeing you again at the same place, and have been continually on horseback in quest of that happiness. At last I thought of your parish-church, where I might possibly see you. I shall not speak to you at present; but will order matters so as to do it without being observed. Be not wanting, my dear girl, on your part, to assist in what I shall contrive hereafter for your service. It is impossible to express how much I love you.

THE MARQUIS OF L. V.

I listened to what Colin said with the greatest attention; I even made him repeat

repeat it several times, and felt a satisfaction I never experienced before. To be beloved by so compleat a person was a bewitching thing for a country girl, whose ambition could never have looked so high. As I was taken up with this reflection, Colin, who easily observed it, cried out, "Why, Jenny, methinks this letter makes you thoughtful. Gad-zookers! if it should be really so I would tear it."—"Lord, I am thinking!" says I, being come to myself, and apprehensive lest he should suspect any thing, "of my friend; she must be very happy to have such a person in love with her. One would think he is sincere by what he writes, and consequently she should not discourage him."—"No, certainly," replied Colin, "*She that will not when she may.* If he is in earnest, she ought to strike the bargain at once, without *shilly-shally*, which ruins so many girls. They must be coy, forsooth; they must mince; they must fiddle-faddle; and what comes of all this? why the spark gives them the bag to hold, finding a better reception elsewhere, and they may go hang themselves. Phio! the bird is flown, and they put finger in the eye; marry, come up! is it not so, Jenny? I speak of us country lads; but as for your town gentry, do you feel why you had best have a care of the main chance, for that is all they want, and then leave you to make the best of a bad market."

"Ah, true enough!" answered I, "none but fools will trust them. Bye, bye, Colin; I must go and acquaint my friend with the contents of her letter, and know what answer she will give. I'll be with you again presently, and bring pen and ink for you to write the answer; will ye, Colin?"—"There is no occasion for such a hurry," says he; "but you are always in haste when I am by."—"Well, well, Colin," I replied, "we shall have opportunities enough. Adieu! I am under a promise, and a maid, you know, must keep her word."

Saying this I rose, and made the best of my way towards the village. But being come to a warren, which had a retired place in one corner, I there threw myself on the grass, and ran over the letter in my mind. Vanity had already found the way into my breast, young as

I was, and betrayed itself on a thousand different occasions. My cloaths were superior to any in the village, and yet I often staid at home under a pretended indisposition, when there was any new piece of finery wanting to compleat my dress. This frequently drew the raillery of my acquaintance upon me, to my no small vexation. I found in myself an elevation of mind, which would not suffer me to stoop to a carriage suitable with a clownish life. My soul was on fire at the very name of Paris; and when my mother gave me the history of any country girl, who had there made her fortune, it always ran in my head I should have the same good luck. Let any one judge, then, what an impression the marquis's person and letter must make. My head ran on nothing else, and my pride drew very favourable consequences for the time to come. Above all, I determined to answer the letter, though the shame of owning I could not write gave me some uneasiness; and yet I resolved to do it, that I might not be obliged to employ Colin any more, lest his distrustful nature should discover my affairs; besides, his very person was become disagreeable from the moment I fancied myself beloved by the marquis. Such were my reflections at that time of day, when I had not the address I acquired afterwards. People may talk of natural parts, but without experience little is to be expected from thence. I had the precaution, before I came from home, to furnish myself with the necessary implements for writing, and as I had staid a sufficient time for talking with my supposed friend, I returned to Colin. When he saw me coming he ran to meet me.

"Dear Jenny," says he, "you have made haste."—"Yes," I replied, "I met Molly in the warren; she was in a great hurry to be gone, after we had talked together, for fear of being discovered."—"Ah, cunning baggage!" cried Colin; "if ever she marries, she will be one too many for her husband."—"We have no time to lose," says I, interrupting him; "let us write the letter."

Colin took the paper, and making a desk of the crown of his hat, "Now," says he, "what must I write to this fine spark?"—"Why, she would have you tell him," answered I, "that—"

"She has not so good an opinion of herself."

“ herself, as to imagine he can be so much in love as he seems to say; that, notwithstanding her mean education, she knows the duty she owes herself well enough, to be sensible of the unsuitableness of the passion he aims to create; that she could wish, though she knows not why, he were sincerer in what he says; that she cannot write, and consequently is obliged to have recourse to another, in order to answer his letter; but she will not run the same hazard any more for fear——”

“ Thank you for nothing,” cried Colin, interrupting me, “ I’ll write no such thing.” “ Why so?” says I. “ That’s only to have done with me,” replied he, “ when you have no farther occasion. No, no, the devil take me if I write it!” “ Come, come, Colin,” answered I, “ let’s have no more words; we may be surprized before we make an end.”

He complied at last, muttering something to himself; and my letter ended with a grateful acknowledgment of the marquis’s kindness.

As soon as the letter was finished, I put it up, and returned home, Colin accompanying me, which I was well enough pleased with, lest my mother should take me to task. She approved of our correspondence, as she had her views in it, and would gladly have had his father in the same way of thinking, there being considerable matters to be expected.

When I reached home it was time to go to church, whither I was followed by the marquis’s gentleman, who placed himself close behind me. I easily understood, though I was but a beginner, that he waited for my answer. My prayer-book was the best conveyance I could pitch upon for giving the letter, and which, by his dexterity, succeeded admirably well. Soon after I retired, and saw no more of him.

It is not to be expressed how much I enjoyed myself, upon having accomplished my design without being discovered. What a skilful master must Love be, employing every thing to compass his ends! Under him I made a considerable progress in a short time, and soon became a great proficient, as we shall see hereafter.

We were sitting down to supper, when who should come in but the marquis’s gentleman, followed by the mayor and

curate of the village. I no sooner saw them, but the apprehension of being discovered put me into such a fit of trembling and blushing, that it was well no one observed me. The stranger addressing himself to my father, enquired if one of his daughters did not sometimes carry provisions to certain workmen in the forest. “ Yes, Sir,” answered my father, “ that is she. — Come hither,” says he, speaking to me; “ how have you contrived to bring all this good company hither?” The very tone of his voice struck terror into me. “ Don’t be frightened, pretty maid!” cried the valet de chambre, seeing me in so much confusion, “ these gentleman and I intend you no harm; and though it is by his majesty’s orders, which my lord marquis has received, we shall say nothing to Miss but what is very agreeable.” — “ Her name is Jenny, at your service,” cried my father, interrupting him; “ we have no Miss here.” — “ If she has not had that title yet,” replied the curate, very solemnly, “ she may hereafter. But that is neither here nor there. This gentleman has something to say to you, and deserves your thanks for the pains he has taken to find out your daughter. We have been at twenty places before we came hither. The first we enquired of was John Le Moine your gossip; then of James Roussy; after that we were with Thomas La Vigne, never dreaming of you, being of so little note. However, it is all come out, and I am not sorry for it.”

This harangue of the curate’s put me to the blush, as there was no occasion for his running us down at such a rate.

“ I was going to inform you,” says the valet de chambre, “ that my lord marquis has ordered me to make enquiry after a girl who was on the road leading to —— last Wednesday, when the king passed by. The occasion of this is, he gave his majesty an account of the extraordinary surprize with which she was seized at his presence. The king was so well pleased with the accident, that he has sent a gratuity by him. And since you are the person, Miss, I’ll go and acquaint my lord marquis.” — “ No, no,” cried my mother, overjoyed at what she heard, “ I’ll take her to him myself; it will be too much trouble for him to come hither, nor is this place fit to receive him in.”

The curate approved of it; but the valet de chambre, who knew his errand, very readily replied, that it was highly improper. 'My lord,' says he, 'is intrusted with the execution of the king's orders, and to my knowledge will not be wanting in the least tittle. Do you stay here, and I'll acquaint him with my good success, which will be very acceptable, as he is a man who very much delights in acts of generosity.'

He went out as soon as he had done speaking, followed by the curate; who, big with the honour of being concerned in an affair where the king's name was employed, gave me a tap on the cheek, bidding me be a good girl, and God would bless me.

We remained entranced with what had passed, till our neighbours, who had been upon the watch, came in crowds, and awaked us with their compliments upon this occasion, seasoned with an air of envy they could not disguise. As to my brother and sister, they took so little care to hide their jealousy, that my father easily discovered it, and reprimanded them accordingly. The adventure affected him very much; and, as he did not want sense, he began to see through the little ill offices that had been done me. 'Good luck attends her,' says he, speaking to the neighbours that were present, 'and did so at her birth. She is good-natured enough, and with God's grace and the reverend doctor's good advice she may come to something.'

Whilst my father was thus entertaining himself and his neighbours, my thoughts were not idle. As simple as I was, I could so far unravel this adventure, as to see it was owing to my letter, and no more than a pretext for an opportunity of seeing me often without giving umbrage, and perhaps with a view of doing me some service.

I was charmed with the dexterous method he had taken, and easily conceived it was only a stratagem, though I was willing to allow it the most favourable name. 'What a happy meeting!' said I to myself. 'Who knows but my fortune is made, and I may one day bid adieu to the village!' On the other hand, I was not without ominous apprehensions. 'Possibly this nobleman,' thought I, 'with all his protestations of love, may only design my ruin!' The adventure of a young woman of

the neighbourhood, which happened but two years before, and I had just been acquainted with, raised this suspicion, which otherwise perhaps had never entered my head. Examples oftentimes strongly influence our conduct, and it is frequently owing to the misfortunes we see in others, that we shun what might otherwise be inevitable: a faithful mirror! and well deserves to be consulted. But to return to this young person, whose too great credulity and unthinking vanity proved her ruin.

Her name was Charlotte; she was handsome, well shaped, and of so sweet a temper, as endeared her to all her acquaintance. Her circumstances, it is true, were but mean, yet she had very advantageous matches proposed to her, the most inconsiderable of which was a very sufficient provision for life. But through inexperience she overlooked such favourable prospects. Her father, indeed, who judged better, pressed her very much to come to a resolution, and by a proper choice to advance herself in the world: but the amiable temper of his daughter was an invincible charm to hinder him from laying an absolute command, in opposition to the dislike she had taken to matrimony. Things remained in this situation for some years, till a fatal accident, she little expected, brought on her ruin, and an unavailing regret for having preferred her own inclinations to those of her friends.

Going one day to sell fruit at Fontainebleau, she heard somebody call to her from a window. Upon this she went up to the house, which made a great appearance, and was met at the door by a servant, who shewed her into an apartment very sumptuously furnished. She found a young person sitting there in a rich night-gown. As soon as he saw her; 'Come in, sweetheart,' says he, 'let's see your fruit; it should be good.' She readily uncovered the basket; and, huckster like, assured him very seriously no better could be bought. While she was thus employed in setting off her fruit, the young nobleman, for such he was, considered her very attentively.

The Duke of —, the person she was talking with, was now in the twenty fourth year of his age; much given to women and pleasures, to which purpose a certain part of his income was entirely dedicated. A handsome black man,

man, his eyes lively beyond imagination. His decent carriage and apparently modest behaviour, were bewitching allurements to such as were unacquainted with him. Debauched as he was, in satisfying his appetites he never employing treachery; but, like many others, was ruled by his valet de chambre, one Dupin, the base purveyor to his darling passion.

As to Charlotte, she always went very neat; her behaviour and sweetness of temper, seconded by her beauty, soon made a conquest of the duke's affections. 'There is nothing about you,' says he, 'but what is charming; your basket of fruit is what I take the least notice of.'—'Your goodness, Sir,' says she, 'is pleased to think so; but from a country girl you must not expect a suitable reply to such compliments. I have often heard that you fine gentlemen take a pleasure in diverting yourselves at the cost of poor simple girls like myself.'—'How!' said the duke, interrupting her, 'I see you don't know me: my sincerity was never questioned, for I scorn to say one thing and mean another; but since you are pleased to be of a contrary opinion, I have done.'—'I do not pretend,' replied she, 'that you said any thing I can take amiss, or that you had any such intention.'—'No, certainly,' continued the duke, unwilling to frighten her from coming again. 'Well, say no more of that; I have a mind to buy your fruit, that is the business; I shall be glad to have more another time.' Saying this, he made her a genteel bow, and retired to his closet, after he had ordered his valet de chambre to take care of her. 'Shew her,' said he, 'the larder, that she may breakfast; and let her be paid.' A glance from his eye informed Dupin how to behave; it was what he had been often used to. He treated Charlotte with great respect, paid her double the worth of her fruit, and under pretence of enquiring where it grew, learned her place of abode. He insisted on her promising to call again, and assured her the duke would take her fruit as often as she came to town. In a word, her complaisance was such, that she went away very well satisfied, with a full resolution to come again as soon as possible.

Her father's subsistence was a large

orchard, which some years turned to a very considerable account. He was mightily pleased to hear what an advantageous market his daughter had made, and with the prospect of selling his fruit upon the same terms for the future. Two days after, he sent her again to town; she was immediately admitted at the duke's, who behaved with the same moderation as before, and she returned home better pleased than she was the first day.

The third time she came, who should open the door but the duke himself, very richly dressed; a handsome well-made man, as was before mentioned. Charlotte took but too much notice of him. 'You seem surprized, my pretty maid,' said the duke, 'to see me come to the door myself; I think my servants are all lost: but they often serve me thus; they know my good nature, and are apt to abuse it. Come in, they will be here soon; we can chat in the mean time.' Upon this he led her into a parlour fitted up in the most elegant taste. 'Lord,' cried Charlotte, 'what a fine place!'—'Yes, my pretty one,' replied the duke, 'it is so whilst you are in it. Sit down, my angel; lay aside your basket. Come, come,' continued he, seeing she made a difficulty of doing it; 'sit down, I say; you are at home here, use no ceremony: I am a stranger to you, otherwise you would know I am a great enemy to all formality.' At last she was prevailed with to sit.

'My valet de chambre informs me,' continued the duke, 'that you live at N——: I go sometimes that way; I'll call and eat some cream with you. I am fond of it, but from your hand it will be delicious; for, to be plain with you, Charlotte, the first moment I beheld you, my heart was dedicated to your service. How happy should I be to gain your favour! Why don't you speak?' added he, taking her by the hand; 'why this silence? It puts me on the rack.'—'What you have been saying, my lord,' answered Charlotte with her usual sweetness, 'has covered me with confusion: this is the first time of my hearing such things, how should I be able to make any answer? I wish I had sense enough to do it; but the simplicity of a country life—' 'That adorable simplicity,' replied the duke

in transport, 'is one of your greatest charms! How much more preferable would the whole sex be, if adorned with that, as well as with your other ravishing graces! But you don't understand me, unfortunate wretch as I am! If my eyes speak not for me, (alas, alas, Charlotte!) words can never express a passion like mine.' All this while he grasped her hands, kissed and bathed them with his tears; in a word, acted the part of a man overwhelmed with affliction. Charlotte was naturally tender; these gestures and expressions, far different from what she ever had been acquainted with; the handsome person of her admirer; her young heart susceptible of an impression; all put together, perplexed her exceedingly. 'I am much concerned,' said she with an air of compassion, 'that I should be the cause of your giving way thus to affliction: had I foreseen it, I would never have come near the house.'—'On the contrary,' replied the duke with great earnestness, 'the sight of you can only afford me relief; those eyes must pronounce me happy or miserable. What would I not give that you could view the inmost thoughts of my soul! you would see how you triumph there!' Saying this, he endeavoured to take her in his arms; she was too discreet to suffer it, but rising up, told him with a bashful blush, she plainly saw it was time for her to be gone; She made towards the door in order to go out; when the duke, throwing himself before her, cried out, 'Stay, my angel! you are mistress here, and have nothing to fear: stay, stay! I'll do whatever you require; I will provide a husband for you; I will settle you handsomely in the world.'—'I am too young,' she replied, 'to make any answer to such things: in the name of goodness let me go!' Saying this, she wept bitterly. The duke, convinced that he only lost his labour, endeavoured to pacify her, and with great difficulty, at last compassed it. The valet de chambre's coming in put an end to her fears. Nevertheless, she returned home with a disquiet of mind arising from love: the scene she had beheld had it's effect; her heart was entangled, and in a few days she longed as much to see the duke, as she was before desirous to avoid him. It is true, her good sense enabled her to resist any thoughts of returning; but

this force upon her inclinations was so violent, as very much prejudiced her health. She grew very pale, as we all remarked, though we could not so much as guess at the cause.

Eight days were now passed without her hearing any thing of the duke, when he came to the village, and enquired after a man whose daughter had brought him fruit. As he was the only one in the place that dealt in that commodity, he was soon known, and the duke ordered all he had to be sent home; he then took a fancy to walk in the orchard where it grew, Charlotte's father waiting upon him all the while. By the time he imagined his project had succeeded, he retired.

While the father was taken up in attending the duke, his subtle valet de chambre applied himself to the daughter. He exerted all his eloquence to seduce her, and draw her to Fontainebleau, in order to comply with his master's passion.

He took a great deal of pains to set off his birth, wealth, and person; he laid before her the great advantages that might be made of such an amour; but all to no purpose. He changed his battery, and employed the appearance of virtue to draw her into vice. He proposed the making her a duchess; which he assured should soon be brought about if she would come into his measures. He reminded her of her own condition, and that such an opportunity of aggrandizing herself was not to be neglected for any imaginary punctilio. Here her resolution began to fail her; love and ambition prevailed so far, that she promised to come the next day to town, to see, as he expressed it, whether there was any design of imposing upon her.

Dupin acquainted the duke beforehand with what had passed, and shewed him the necessity of dissembling with Charlotte, if he hoped to succeed in his designs. 'Thou art certainly bantering me,' replied the duke; 'though I love the girl to distraction, I'll not enter into any engagement with her, which I don't intend to perform, much less commit so great a folly as to marry her. Neither love nor money ought ever to countenance preposterous matches. Depend upon it, I'll never follow the example of —; who, in order to gratify his passion, was guilty of a thousand follies, and then,

to

to crown the work, married his own maid. A very virtuous wife, perhaps you'll say; but I don't much admire the artful methods she made use of to gain her ends. I could mention ———, who was drawn in to marry a baker's daughter, by her taking advantage of his fear of sprites. His valet de chambre acted the part of an apparition, threatening him with eternal ruin, if he did not make an honest woman of her. He was heartily frightened, and the plot succeeded. The Earl of ——— is much in the same situation. He lay under obligations to a poor girl who had saved his life, and rather than part with twenty thousand livres, which she delivered at his hands, he very fairly married her to save his money. I might reckon up a great many more unequal marriages; these parts furnish many examples, but they shall never prevail upon me to make one of the number. So take your own measures for bringing the matter to bear: I own I am in love; but remember, I will neither make nor perform any engagement.

The valet de chambre endeavoured with great earnestness to prevail upon him to talk with Charlotte, at least in an ambiguous manner, on the subject he had entertained her with the night before; but all in vain. The duke had honourable principles, though his youth hurried him into some excesses. When Charlotte came, Dupin persuaded her not to insist upon any thing, assuring her that nothing could secure his master's affections more, than an entire confidence in his honour. 'Your compliance,' said he, 'with his request, will in a few days make you a duchess.' And the better to satisfy her as to this particular, he reckoned up several examples: 'which makes the thing,' says he, 'evident beyond dispute.' Charlotte, incapable of deceiving others, could not see through the artifices by which this villain at last drew her into the snare. The vanity of becoming a woman of quality, the high rank, and its consequences, with which she was flattered, dazzled her understanding; in fine, she agreed to spend a week at Fontainebleau, on condition her father would give his consent. A pretence was soon contrived. A message was sent in the duchess's name, the duke's

mother, to her father, in order to have her to town; he thought himself much honoured in the affair, and sent her very willingly.

She was no sooner there, but all engines were at work to oblige and divert her. She began to relish a life of ease and pleasure; what put the finishing hand to the business was fine cloaths and dress, of which she had always been passionately fond. She fancied herself already a duchess; here she faltered, and here her ruin was completed.

Every day she expected to see the effects of Dupin's promises, and he as often found pretexts to put her off. Time slipped away, her lover was upon the point of going to court, to which his rank and employment about the king's person called him. Her passion for the duke was inexpressible; and as she was used by him with the greatest tenderness, she thought herself perfectly happy. But at last she found herself with child, and the duke gone to court without bidding her farewell. His passion was sated, and almost worn out; the valet de chambre was directed to rid him of Charlotte. The poor creature began to forebode her misfortunes; her commerce with the duke had given her an insight into things; she was no longer a simple country girl. She saw plainly the danger she was in of being discarded; she had mentioned to her lover the promises made her in his name, but he disowned them: she wept, tore her hair, and took on bitterly, but all to no purpose; the duke went away without the least emotion.

She taxed the valet de chambre with it: the villain threw the blame on his master, and was the first in calling him an impostor. But Charlotte, now made desperate, was not to be put off with plausible pretences; she exclaimed so loudly against her deceivers, that the duke, to whom Dupin had sent an account of her rage, apprehending the affair's becoming publick, proposed a considerable sum of money towards getting her a husband. She stood out a long time, but convinced at last that her ruin was inevitable, she came to a resolution. She took the twenty thousand livres, part of which paid her portion in a monastery to which she retired, the rest she distributed among her relations. The affair made some noise; though till then

then it had been kept private, it was now no longer a secret to the whole village.

I had been acquainted with this affair, which, with all its circumstances, came fresh into my memory on this occasion. I resolved with myself to be more wary and more discreet than the unhappy Charlotte. In vain did my inclinations, prejudiced as they were, side with the marquis, and set him off in the most favourable light. My virtue interposed; I determined never to swerve from its dictates, and as often as my heart should give occasion, to call it to my assistance. From that moment I have constantly adhered to this maxim, and have just reason to look upon it as the foundation of all my good fortune. Under the direction of so good a guide there is no danger of going astray.

I was taken up with these reflections, when word was brought of the marquis's arrival; he came leading the countess, and was followed by a great deal of company, whom he found at the castle. He had already acquainted them with what had happened when I met the king on the road, and the gratuity his majesty had ordered. But he did not inform them, that the affection he had at that instant taken to me, had put him upon laying the circumstances of my adventure before the king in such moving terms, as laid his majesty under a kind of necessity of shewing me some regard. The company were so well pleased with the account, that they all resolved to see in what manner I should behave on the occasion. This gave the countess an opportunity of informing them, that the Marquis of L—V—, father to the young nobleman, was my godfather. The young marquis was secretly transported with this discovery, and which afterwards served him for a pretence, when, under his father's name, he gave me so many signal proofs of his love and generosity.

As the company drew near, we advanced to meet her ladyship. She no sooner saw me, but she called out, 'Come hither, my dear Jenny, I am overjoyed that you begin so early to taste the sweets of your good fortune. Don't be afraid,' continued she, seeing me in great confusion; 'we know your education has been such as a village affords.—How do you like my god-daughter, my lord? Her carriage is not the politest;

'but, with good instruction, she may make some figure in the world.'—'Indeed, Madam,' replied the marquis, 'your ladyship must pardon me; I think this pretty creature very well behaved; she wants but little improvement, to be as you would have her.' The company busied themselves in commending me; one extolled my beauty, my neatness, and fancy, in my country attire; another praised my complexion; a third thought my hand and arm much beyond what is usual in low life. In a word, every one contributed something to increase the perplexity I was in. As to my father, he afforded no small diversion with his. 'She is your servant.'—'No, indeed; I wish she were.' My mother made no answer, but a great many curtsies; whilst I was the only one who did not dare to look up; and if any thing about me could create delight, it must have been the extreme confusion I laboured under.

When the first volley of compliments was over, the marquis, addressing himself to me with as much respect as if I had been a duchess, said, 'The king has commanded me, my pretty one, to put into your hands this purse of thirty louis-d'ors. You owe it to the singular satisfaction you expressed at seeing his person, an account of which was given him. I am exceedingly pleased he thought fit to employ me on this occasion, and the more so, as I find, by this lady's information, that my father stood with her at your christening. It is what I was unacquainted with before, but I dare engage my father will be extremely pleased to hear of this adventure.'—'That you may assure yourself,' replied the countess. 'But, Jenny, what do you say to my lord marquis? You must thank him for the pains he has taken.' I made him a curtsy, and acknowledged the favour, but in so low a voice, that I dare say nobody could tell what I said, nor indeed did I know very well myself. 'Mind,' says the countess, winking on the company, 'how I shall put her to it.—Come, Jenny,' continued she, 'tell us sincerely what you will do with your money? How will you lay it out?'—'Since you are pleased, Madam, to command me,' answered I, 'the best use I can put his majesty's bounty to, is to give it to my mother.'—'How!' said the marquis, hastily,

hastily, 'won't you keep some for your own use?'—'Indeed, my Lord,' I replied, scarce daring to look in his face, 'I don't want any thing; I shall only beg of her to have me *taught to write*, that if ever I should be at any distance, I may be able to enquire after her health.' He was charmed with my ready answer, which he understood perfectly well by my letter which Colin wrote. 'Ah, Madam!' cried he, turning to the countess, 'how commendable is this desire of improvement! it would be barbarous to the last degree not to second it.'—'It is not my design,' replied the countess, smiling, 'to be guilty of any such thing; I'll see if I too can't do something proper for the king to be informed of.—Jenny,' says she to me, 'I'll carry you home with me, this very evening, if you have a mind; are you willing to go?' Upon this, turning myself to my mother; 'You are the properest person, dear mamma,' said I, 'to consider what answer we ought to return to my godmother's great goodness.' But my father saved her the trouble, telling her ladyship, he thought himself much honoured by such a favour. The countess, turning to the marquis, told him, she undertook the charge of me, and would endeavour to make me deserve the notice his majesty had been pleased to honour me with. 'Take your leave, Jenny!' said she to me, turning about and followed by the company. I embraced my mother and the rest of the family with tears in my eyes, feeling at that instant the force of Nature in an upright heart. Here I was not at a loss, but gave full scope to my affections; so true it is, that shame accompanies only irregular passions. I gave the purse to my mother, who told me in a whisper, she would not fail to buy me some new cloaths fit to appear in. Having taken my leave, I followed the company, who were now at some distance. My mother did not leave me till I had joined them; nor then neither, till she had charged me to be always good, and never to forget that no true happiness could be expected without it.

The marquis often looked back. He no sooner saw me alone, but coming up to me, 'How happy, dearest Jenny, am I,' says he, 'to have it in my power to see you, and from time to time to renew such delightful satisfaction! I wish I could make you comprehend,

how dear so long an absence has cost me.'—'I am very sensible, my lord,' answered I, 'how much I am indebted to your generosity: I hope you will accept of the acknowledgments I make, though they are far short of what they ought to be; you must attribute it to my small capacity, and the company I have been used to; they were no better than myself, and it could not be expected but I should be much confused on such occasions: perhaps, when I have been some time with my godmother, I may learn more breeding.'—'Your good sense charms me,' replied the marquis; 'it wants only a little improvement: but you must learn to distinguish your friends. And give me leave, my dear Jenny, not to lose this favourable opportunity, but to speak as becomes the sincerest friend you have. You are beautiful, and will every day be more so. The countess sees much company, and consequently it cannot be long before addresses will be made to you. But remember, few young men are in the same way of thinking with myself; they carry danger with them, and will leave no way untried to deceive you; if you listen to them, you must give me over for lost. I need not say any more at present of what I have to speak of; a little experience of the world will let you into part of it. In the meantime, endear yourself as much as possible to your godmother; bating the usual foibles of the sex, a good woman, and endowed with excellent qualifications worthy your imitation. Some other time I will give you her character as a model by which you may form your own: you see I don't treat you like a child. Nevertheless I ought to ask your pardon for taking upon me to give you lessons; but the great share I must bear in every thing that concerns you, makes me thus look forward into your affairs. I must not forget to acquaint you that her ladyship has a daughter, who, as she is much inferior in point of beauty, will be jealous of you from the first moment. Her brother is a handsome young gentleman, and I have reason to think will be as little able to resist your charms as myself; this gives me some uneasiness, as well as his having continual opportunities of seeing you. He will make love, and perhaps

perhaps gain upon your affections: if so, what must become of me!

'I don't know,' answered I, 'what love is: I have hitherto lived very happy, unacquainted with any uneasiness, but what arose from seeing my mother in affliction, or the peevishness of my brother and sister. There is nothing but your generous behaviour towards—' 'No more of generosity,' replied he: 'I am in pain when you bestow that name on such trifling marks of the most tender friendship. You are not yet acquainted with me; when you are, you will be sensible, how happy I am in this small opportunity of shewing how tenderly I love you.'—'Lord!' said I, smiling, 'you are always talking of love: let it rest till I know what it is, and whether a maid may be allowed to hear of it.'—'I'll teach you what it is,' replied he. 'No, no, my lord,' I cried; 'my mother has often charged me never to listen to men; since all they say only tends to impose upon us: I dare say my godmother is of the same opinion.'—'Take care,' replied the marquis very earnestly, 'that you never mention a word to her concerning my passion. She is of a jealous temper, of which more hereafter; it may prevent my seeing of you, and upon that my very life depends.'—'Nay, then,' added I, 'there must be harm in it, since you are afraid to let it be known.'—'No, my dearest Jenny, there is none; have a better opinion of me.' I was about to reply: I found a facility in doing it, that surprised me. I was under no restraint with the marquis; and if he had been one of my play-fellows, I could not have reasoned with greater freedom. I was about, I say, to enquire why he should give himself this preference, when my godmother, turning about, called to me. Upon our coming up to her; 'How now!' says she to me, 'what, are you listening to the marquis? What subject has he been upon? Love, to be sure. Remember, Jenny, it is poison, and oftentimes fatal.'—'I know nothing of the matter, Madam,' answered I. 'My lord, to divert himself I suppose, has been enquiring after our country amusements, and I have given him the best account I can.'—'It is very true,' says he, 'this pretty creature has described them in so lively a

manner, that I prefer them far beyond the pleasures of a town life.' The countess rallied him on his new taste; the company took up the subject, till, without perceiving it, we had reached the castle.

The countess was no sooner in her apartment, but she called for Mademoiselle De Parc. She had been formerly her waiting-woman, though at present had no other employment but to govern her ladyship, as well as the rest of the family. She might have some fifty years over her head, was lean and wrinkled; a countenance much upon the wheedler and devotee; she would always be of your opinion till you had placed a confidence in her, which she was sure to make a handle of, to tyrannize with impunity. She knew the intrigues of a family, was always finding fault, except her avarice interposed. She loved money, and made no secret of it upon proper occasions: any fault would be excused where presents mediated a pardon. It was to this antiquated piece of formality I was given in charge. 'I recommend my god-daughter to your care for education,' said the countess to her: 'she is good conditioned, and naturally well inclined; I make no doubt but she will advance apace under your direction. Do you know the king has taken notice of her, and given thirty louis d'ors!'—'Thirty louis d'ors!' cried Mademoiselle De Parc, interrupting her; 'no little matter, I assure you. Where are they?'—'Her good nature,' replied the countess, 'prevailed on her to give them to her mother.'—'She had done better to have kept them,' replied the old Abigail with a frown; 'I could have laid them by for her as well as another. Who knows what may happen? How could she be so giddy! She would have known where to find them at a pinch.'—'That is not the business we are about,' said the countess, interrupting her; 'where will you lay her?'—'Why, in my chamber,' answered De Parc; 'where can she be better?'—'That is true,' said the countess. 'But the first thing she is set about, must be to learn to write. When she can do that, I will take her to Versailles, where she shall return the king thanks for his bounty in her own hand-writing; it may possibly engage him to continue it.'—'Very true,'

'true,' replied my new governess; 'that is no bad thought.' During this conversation I never opened my lips: my heart misgave me; I dreaded my present situation, and with regret looked back upon that I had just now left. After much discourse of this kind, Mademoiselle de Parc seized on me as her prey, and ever after followed me like my shadow.

The marquis staid some time at the castle, during which he continually sought for an opportunity to speak with me. But this was no easy matter, as I was always with my governess, or else in the countess's bed-chamber, learning to embroider. I sometimes met his eyes, and learned from them how disagreeable this restraint was to him; by degrees I became acquainted with their language. Whilst he staid, nothing affected me but the endearing reflection of being beloved by him. I apprehended no harm in amusing myself with the idea of him; gratitude, methought, required it of me. Frivolous pretext! fatal mistake! a fire lay hid under it, whose gentle heat pleased at present, but soon broke out with great violence. Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, the countess's daughter, was about fifteen years of age; of a fair complexion, the only personal advantage she was mistress of: her eyes large and dull, but in that particular, impostors; for she did not want wit, though at that time it was unequal, and not very taking. Her countenance deceives one; she being in appearance good-natured and engaging, but in reality envious and sullen. In consideration of favours received from her mother, when at her house, I would gladly have omitted this character; but it was impracticable to proceed in my story without bringing her upon the stage, as several future events will be found entirely owing to her treachery and malice. All I can do in this case is to soften the touches, when I shall have occasion to speak of her hereafter. To this day my revenge has been very favourable; but if she should know me again, it will be her interest to keep her own secret. My little experience did not prevent my discerning the uneasiness my arrival at the castle created in her. When every one else took a liking to me, she was in a different way of thinking, and by her haughty behaviour diminished the good opinion

others had of me: I was very sensible of her coldness, or rather her envy, in my regard. It gave me some concern. The chevalier her brother was in the other extreme: from the first moment he began to fancy me. I was convinced of it by his behaviour and his discourse: he looked upon me as an agreeable amusement for the time he was to stay at the castle. My innocent and unaffected carriage seemed to promise him an easy conquest. In a word, he was exactly what the marquis had described; tall and well-shaped; his behaviour, in appearance obliging, but in reality far from it; very passionate; and, like his sister, excessively haughty. Where he endeavoured to please, he would artfully disguise these ill qualities; but if the success did not answer, he was sure to employ artifice and force. I had leisure enough to study both their characters; and the usage I met with from their hands taught me, by fatal experience, never to form an opinion of any one from the first impression, nor contract a friendship, unless with those whom, by a moral certainty, I knew to be of a character very opposite to theirs.

The marquis had the dexterity, the day before he left the castle, to contrive an opportunity of speaking with me, whilst I was in the countess's room at my work, and a great deal of company present, who dined at the castle. He proposed Pharaoh to her ladyship, and under pretence of not understanding the game, prevailed upon her, with very little difficulty, to hold the bank for him. The company immediately engaged, and through their eagerness at play, Mademoiselle De Parc, the marquis, and myself, were soon left alone. He offered her a louis-d'or to venture with, in which she should go halves if she had good luck. This was a temptation not to be resisted. Her back was no sooner turned, but addressing himself to me, 'How happy am I, my dearest Jenny,' said the marquis, 'in this opportunity of talking with you! I have long sought for it: what would I give to enjoy it every day! I am going, my lovely creature; I cannot stay any longer without discovering what it is that fixes me here. May I not enquire, before I go, what place I have in your affection? Speak, my angel! don't refuse me this satisfaction; life's a burden to me without, at least, the hopes of gaining your affections.'

‘fections. Consider it is very uncertain when I shall be able to see you again; and yet that is the only comfort left me, in the situation in which my passion for you has placed me.’ He uttered this with so much tenderness, that I could not forbear looking at him, fetching a deep sigh at the same time. ‘What means that sigh, my charmer?’ cried he, in the most affectionate manner. ‘Am I so happy, sincere as I am, to move your compassion?’—‘Ah, my lord,’ replied I, ‘leave me, I beg: whenever you are near, or speak to me, I am not myself. What do you aim at? Why do you pursue a young creature of my low condition? I know very well my distance; yet I am not afraid to say, that as great as you are, if your designs are dishonourable, they shall never succeed.’—‘God forbid!’ cried he, ‘that I should have such a thought. All I desire is to love you, and obtain your favour.’—‘Alas! to what purpose?’ answered I. ‘Why does every gentleman say the same? Is it the fashion at Paris? In all my life I never heard so much of love as within these eight days I have been here.’—‘How!’ cried the marquis, quite amazed, ‘this is the first time I could ever have an opportunity of making my addresses to you.’—‘As if you were the only one!’ answered I, very innocently. ‘All the other gentlemen are continually upon the same strain; but in particular the countess’s son never suffers me to have a moment’s quiet.’—‘Heavens!’ says the marquis, interrupting me, ‘sure he is not in love with you?’—‘I can’t tell what it is to be in love,’ replied I; ‘but if every one is in love that says so, he certainly is.’—‘And what answer do you make him?’ cried the marquis, with great earnestness. ‘Really I take so little notice of what he says,’ answered I, ‘that I can give no account. But this I know very well, I should not be sorry if he concerned himself no more with me than his sister does.’—‘May I depend upon this, my dear Jenny?’ said the marquis, a little recovered. ‘Don’t you find a pleasure in hearing him?’—‘Ah, not in the least!’ answered I, very simply; ‘so far from it, that one word of yours makes a much greater impression on me than a hundred of his.’—‘How she charms me!’ cried

the marquis. ‘How happy should I be if I were convinced of what she says with so much sincerity! I would not change my condition with any thing the whole world affords. Repeat it once more, my lovely dear: you restore me to life; my whole happiness depends on that acknowledgment.’—‘Heavens! what have I said!’ replied I, astonished to see him thus transported. ‘What is it that pleases you so much? Perhaps I may have done amiss without knowing it?’—‘No, no,’ said he, interrupting me hastily; ‘never think of acting otherwise. If your heart has explained itself, don’t contradict it; it shall never repent it’s condescensions in my behalf.’—‘My heart has said nothing!’ answered I, interrupting in my turn very briskly. ‘If I have let drop any words without knowing their meaning, you ought not to take any advantage from thence.’—‘What, am I to go away, then?’ replied the marquis, overwhelmed with vexation and regret. ‘Your heart says nothing! To another it may possibly speak. Farewel life, since I have incurred your hatred.’ These last words were spoke in so moving an accent, that they affected me very much: I looked at him, and the extreme sorrow I saw in his countenance, made me heartily repent I had been the occasion of it. ‘Good God!’ I cried with great anxiety; ‘what a misfortune is it not to know how to express one’s self! that’s the reason I am thought to say one thing when I mean another. Why should you afflict yourself in this manner? It was far from my intention. Besides it is wrong in you to give any heed to a person who has not wit enough to answer you: have but patience till I have learned some from my godmother, and then I’ll say nothing that will give offence.’ He could not forbear smiling at my ingenuity. ‘There it is again!’ cried I. ‘This moment you were ready to cry; and now I have made some blunder you are laughing at me. Very well! it’s high time for me to hold my tongue.’ I spoke this with some warmth; and fell to my work, without taking the least notice of a thousand passionate and tender expressions he employed to pacify me.

At last, wearied out with my obstinacy, the marquis remained silent: imagining he was gone, I looked up hastily

to see what was become of him, but was much out of countenance to find him looking stedfastly on me. 'You certainly design my death,' said he, 'since you will not vouchsafe me a word, nor so much as a look. What have I done to deserve such usage? I go, then, with a heavy heart: cruel creature, farewell for ever!' This moved me: I was obliged, methought, to justify myself from such an imputation. Of how great force is prejudice in the conduct of our lives! 'No, my lord,' answered I with some warmth, 'my behaviour deserves no such injurious names. I am not, nor ever was, cruel to any thing; so far from it, I cannot see a lamb killed without crying. I never could hurt the least thing; even when my brother and sister have fallen upon me, I would not so much as defend myself for fear of hurting them. Judge, then, if I deserve to be called cruel.' Had I gone on, the marquis would have given me the hearing, so well was he pleased with my ingenuous simplicity; but love places every thing in a favourable light. 'I ask your pardon, my dearest Jenny,' said the marquis, 'if I have offended you: the word *cruel* does not mean *ill-natured*; however, had you persisted in not making me any answer, you certainly would have deserved to be called so. But now you have restored me to life, and I will never use that word again. There is no time to be lost; the company may, perhaps, give over play very soon, and I should never have forgiven myself if I had omitted to settle one point before I go. I design to send Dubois [his valet de chambre] twice a week under a pretended compliment to the countess, that I may hear from you. At another opportunity I will acquaint you what method I have used to prevent her taking any umbrage at it. Dubois will find means to speak to you, and bring me your answers, which in some measure may alleviate what I must suffer from your absence. Besides, I shall take all opportunities possible to wait on you, so as not to be observed. At present I shall not press to know what place I have in your affections, since you seem to be so averse to the giving me that satisfaction; however, I shall be able to form some judgment of it, by your earnestness to learn to write; and, I

'flatter myself, I shall then find I am not altogether disagreeable to you.' He was going on, when my governess came to us with joy in her countenance: she had won four louis-d'ors, and was bringing the marquis his share. 'Pray, Madam,' says he, 'keep them yourself; they may be lucky to you another time. When I return to Versailles, I intend to play for you there, and see whether the same fortune attends you in deep play. The only return I desire is, that you would be careful of this child; you may possibly find your account in it hereafter.' This was taking her on the weak side, especially as she knew the marquis's generosity and exactness in keeping his word. 'You need say no more, my lord,' she replied; 'let me alone: I will take the same care of her as if she were my own daughter. I am not to learn that our young chevalier is very sweet upon her; but I shall watch him so narrowly, that he will not find an opportunity of speaking to her but when I am by. He and I are no strangers one to another; and I am apt to think he will not venture to take any liberties there.' The company left off play just as she had done speaking. The bank, it seems, was broke, and the countess came to acquaint the marquis with his loss; but he seemed very easy as to that particular. Presently a walk was agreed on, so that I was left alone with Mademoiselle De Parc, and soon found the effects of the marquis's civilities, (for so she styled the money and promises she had received from him;) and, indeed, ever after, she used me with the greatest tenderness imaginable.

The Chevalier D'Elbieux, freed from the trouble of doing the honours of the house, applied himself very closely to me: every moment he was urging his passion, and I was as backward in taking any notice of it. How widely different his manner of expressing himself from that of the marquis, when compared together! The one, though polite, yet haughty, and breathing an air of superiority; the other, on the contrary, complaisant, genteel, and accompanied with a deference, as if addressed by an inferior: this certainly was very taking; and, simple as I was, the difference was very remarkable.

The countess soon perceived her son's inclination for me, and reprimanded him

accordingly; but this, far from having the desired effect, only increased his passion. It is true, he became more circumspect in his behaviour, but in a short time I found, by woeful experience, what terrible effects may be expected from restraint, where the heart is not guided by a principle of virtue.

As for Mademoiselle, his sister, I tried all methods to render myself acceptable to her; she condescended to bear with me, but after a manner insupportably haughty. Whether the respectful behaviour of the marquis had given me a wrong turn, or that naturally I was not disposed to submit, I found an infinite difficulty in doing it to her. I often bewailed myself; to which, perhaps, the absence of the marquis did not a little contribute, whose amiable behaviour was set off by every vexation I underwent. What a friend is solitude to love! I soon became acquainted with it; now no longer that ignorant girl who asked what it was. Its revenge was severe, making me feel the full extent of its power and violence. I fell away, lost my complexion and strength. My rest heretofore was undisturbed, but now I seldom enjoyed so great a blessing. I considered the circumstances of my present situation; I was willing to hide their source from myself; and instead of blaming the impetuosity of my affections, I attributed what I suffered to my absence from my mother. But I was very soon convinced of my error.

The countess judged as ill in the affair as myself, imagining the sight of my parents would be of service to me, in the condition to which she saw me reduced. They were sent for, and indeed afforded me some relief; but I received much more from the arrival of Dubois. He gave me an account of his master, and how much he was concerned at my absence. There was no occasion for explaining my sentiments to him; my countenance discovered more than my words could express.

From the time that the marquis left the castle, I had applied myself to learn to write; a valet de chambre belonging to the chevalier, who wrote a fine hand, took a great pleasure in teaching me. I had just began to join the letters; and, to give the marquis a proof of my attention to his requests, I took a childish pleasure in scrawling over a whole

page. This, with great charge, I gave Dubois. He enquired very earnestly whether or no the chevalier made love to me or not. I suppose it was part of his instructions. The answer I made was, that at first he did, but his mother being apprized of it, had taken such methods, that now he durst not so much as open his mouth to me on that subject.

The day after Dubois's return to the marquis happened to be Sunday. I had made a friendship with my governess's niece. Catharine, for that was her name, besides an excellent temper, was mistress of a great deal of wit, and that improved by a genteel education. I have certainly great obligations to her, as she was the first that began to polish the coarse breeding I had contracted at home. Her age as well as experience was superior to mine, but that did not hinder us from being inseparable companions. In the afternoon, when church was done, her aunt walked with us into a neighbouring wood, where an opening was cut for the convenience of hunting. Mademoiselle De Parc had a book in her hand, which gave us an opportunity of retiring to a little distance. Our conversation accidentally turning upon the countess, she informed me that the count and she had been for some years upon very indifferent terms; that it was not much observed in the world, though they very seldom met, he generally coming down into the country when she returned to Paris, the only one point they agreed in. 'Good God!' cried I; 'is it possible for married people to live at a distance from each other? We never hear of any such thing in our village! What can be the cause of it?'—'Love on one side, and jealousy on the other,' answered Catharine. 'The husband dislikes his lady's admirers; and the lady can't prevail upon herself to discard them.'—'What!' says I, interrupting her, 'do people think of gallantry after they are married?'—'Yes, my dear Jenny,' replied she. 'It is certainly very wrong; and yet nothing is more frequent at Paris: there interest, not affection, commonly makes the match; wretched custom taking place of reason. The gentleman has his mistresses, the lady her intrigues, live in the same house, and seldom see the face of each other. It is true, there are some husbands not so tractable, that expect their

‘ their wives should keep up to their duty though they don’t think fit to shew them the example. If the wife happens to be headstrong, and will not comply, they come to expostulations, and so part. Others, like the count and his lady, compromise the matter, and each lives as their fancy directs; consequently they undergo less uneasiness, as they are under less restraint: it has even happened, sometimes, that their complaisant indifference for each other has brought about a sincere reconciliation; this, it is true, is rare, but examples are not wanting to confirm what I have said. As for the count, and the countess your god-mother, I don’t expect they will ever be of that number. The countess is a woman of character, and has always passed for such in the world; but she affects the air of a coquette, loves to be thought amiable, and more to be told so. For these last three months she has been, to her insupportable mortification, without an admirer: it is but since the arrival of the marquis of L. F. at the castle, that she has put on this air of sprightliness and good-humour you see her in; before he made his court she was ready to die of melancholy. For some days he has been very assiduous, and seems deeply in love.’ These last words went to my heart, and caused such an emotion in my spirits, that I fainted away on the grass where we sat. Catharine lifted me up, and with some difficulty brought me to myself: she did not in the least suspect the real cause of my illness, it being presently attributed to the indifferent health I had enjoyed for some days past; they led me back to the castle, and put me immediately to bed. Catharine left me, in order, she said, that I might compose myself, assuring me that an hour or two, if I could sleep, would set me to rights: I pretended to be of the same opinion; she had no sooner shut the door, but I gave a loose to my melancholy reflections.

‘ Ah, wretched creature!’ cried I, bursting into tears, ‘ where is that tranquillity of mind I once possessed! What has thus reduced me of late to this forlorn condition? Why thus altered since the marquis’s absence? What is it to me if he courts the countess? Why am I so deeply concerned

‘ in the affair? What means this affliction his absence brings upon me? Why should I, at these years, loathe what was once so agreeable? Ah! it is but too evident. Barbarous man! how could you say you loved me? why should you thus deceive me? Did I compel you to profess a passion you are entirely void of? Why should you take any advantage of my too great credulity? Heavens! what brought me hither? what will become of me? Ah, Charlotte, Charlotte! I feel too plainly what you must have endured when abandoned by one you loved so well. I but judge of you by myself.’

Her whole adventure presented itself to my disturbed imagination; till, wearied out with tears and vexation, I fell into a profound sleep, which much refreshed my exhausted spirits, and I awaked with some composure of mind.

I was going out of my chamber, but was prevented by the chevalier. ‘ I am told,’ says he, ‘ you have been out of order whilst you were taking the air; and yet I think you look pretty well.’—‘ Likely enough,’ answered I, ‘ but it must be owing to sleep, for I am not perfectly recovered.’—‘ I am sorry for that,’ replied he; ‘ something must be done: I’ll engage to cure you, if you will let me be your physician; I can do more than all the doctors put together.’—‘ Lord, Sir!’ answered I, my resentment against the marquis not being entirely out of my head; ‘ let me alone! I detest the whole sex of men.’—‘ That is only,’ answered the chevalier, ‘ an effect of the spleen: they are not so contemptible neither; at least, those of a certain turn.’ This was spoke with such an air of complacency in his own dear self, as plainly intimated he thought he was one of the number. ‘ No, no, my dearest,’ continued he, ‘ you will not always be so hard-hearted.’ Saying this, he offered to catch me in his arms; but I disengaged myself from him, crying out for help. This brought my governess; who seized him as he was pursuing me, and after upbraiding him with the little respect he paid to his mother’s commands, and assuring him that she at least should insist upon a different behaviour, shut him out with great fury and indignation in his eyes.

‘ What would this fool be at here?’ says she to me when we were alone. ‘ I don’t

‘don’t know,’ replied I; ‘he endeavoured to take me in his arms.’—‘You were in the right,’ said she, ‘to call out; you heard how I handled him; he will not come this way again in haste.—He is very boisterous,’ continued she, ‘and we shall have no loss of him when he is gone; it will not be long first, as the countess informs me. It is really a pity he should behave in this manner; he does not want sense, if he would but govern himself; he has an obliging air, which imposes on those who are not thoroughly acquainted with him. As for my part, I never liked a cloudy cast in his eyes, which makes one think he is always contriving some mischief or another.’

After this discourse we went to the countess’s apartment, little thinking to find the marquis there. This surprize increased my resentment, and made him appear more criminal. I was very near starting at the sight of him, but shame and anger made me stand my ground.

He no sooner saw me, but coming up with great alacrity, ‘How do you do, my charming Jenny?—Good God!’ cried he, seeing me nearer, ‘how she is altered!—What can be the meaning of this, my dear? What has befallen you since I was here?’ In saying this, he took hold of my hand; but I snatched it away again with indignation. ‘She is very feverish!’ continued he, with an air of surprize at what I had done, though he seemed to stifle it. ‘Madam,’ said he, turning to the countess, ‘depend upon it the child is ill, she must be taken care of.’—‘It will go off,’ replied her ladyship, ‘it is only a little melancholy; I have sent for her mother to divert it.—Come hither, Jenny, let me feel your pulse.—You are in the right; she is in a fever.—Send for the doctor,’ continued the countess, speaking to my governess, ‘and put her to bed, and let somebody watch with her.’ The marquis’s eyes were never off me, endeavouring to discover the cause of my vexation, which I had much ado to keep to myself; but I prevented him, by making a curtsy and retiring. I was no sooner in my chamber, than I went to bed with many a melancholy reflection, the consequence of which was so violent a revolution, that in two hours the fever was augmented; and increased so fast afterwards, that by

day-break it redoubled, and I grew light-headed.

The extremity to which I was reduced, rendered me incapable of knowing what had passed; so that I am beholden to Catharine, who never left my bed-side, for that part of my history. The countess was immediately informed of the danger I was in; she was much concerned, and ordered all possible care to be taken of me. Like many others, she dreaded the sick; even her own children in that condition must not have expected to see her: nay, since that, I have met with persons whose apprehensions were carried to that pitch of extravagance, as not to converse with such as visited the sick. It happened, luckily for the marquis, that my godmother was not of this last number. The moment he heard how ill I was, he flew to my chamber; struck with the utmost consternation to see me in so much danger, he could not avoid discovering his passion. Happily nobody was present but my governess and her niece. They soon perceived the occasion of his grief; his passionate exclamations convinced them that love was the source from whence they took their rise. He won their hearts by his generosity, not to say prodigality. ‘It is in vain,’ said he, ‘for me to hide any longer from you the cause of my grief; my life depends upon this child’s recovery.’ Saying this he drew out his purse, and gave it to Mademoiselle De Parc. ‘There are,’ continued he, ‘a hundred louis-d’ors, I beg your acceptance of them; not that I thereby limit my acknowledgments, if you can save her life.—And as for you,’ says he, turning to Catharine, ‘accept of this diamond as a reward for your concern: I am convinced you love my Jenny, and that is enough to make you dear to me. I have a particular view in regard to this lovely young creature, whom I adore, from whose life my own is inseparable.—Ye heavens, who know the purity of my intentions, restore her to me!—Ah! Jenny, Jenny!’ continued he, bursting into tears, ‘you hear me not; alas! could I but save your life, though at the expence of my own! Look up, my angel, see the deplorable condition your poor lover is reduced to!—Good God! whence comes this illness? I left her in perfect health.

‘Heavens!

Heavens! how she burns! Her eyes are wide open, and yet she does not see me! A torrent of tears, which followed, scarce suffered him to speak to his valet de chambre, who came to receive his orders. 'Take post,' said he; 'fetch hither immediately Monsieur N——. Lord, what an unfortunate wretch am I!' His exclamations were so moving, that my governess and her niece could not refrain mingling their tears with his. In the interim, the countess sent to desire his company below stairs. Mademoiselle De Parc prevailed upon him to disguise his grief, and advised him to leave the castle next day, to prevent any discovery. 'If you stay,' says she, 'you will not be able to contain yourself. The countess is quick of apprehension, and will presently unravel the whole affair; especially as you cannot refrain coming continually to this room, though to no manner of purpose. I would have you go and make yourself easy; she has youth and a good constitution on her side; she will work through it: every day you may depend upon hearing from me.—Believe me,' continued she, seeing him irresolute what to do; 'follow my advice, you will not repent it. When she begins to recover, you may return; whereas should your passion be discovered, the countess will send Jenny home, and give the world an opportunity to ruin her reputation.' This last argument prevailed with the marquis: he retired, after he had kissed my hand, and the next day invented an excuse for leaving the castle. It is true, the countess endeavoured with great earnestness to detain him; but the reasons he alledged, prevailed upon her to consent to his departure. At some distance he met Monsieur De N—— and his valet de chambre; he recommended his patient to him, and besought him not to leave her till perfectly recovered. Dubois was charged not to stir till I was entirely out of danger.

The great care that was taken, joined to the skill of the physician, wrought a perfect cure in a fortnight's time. The account Catharine gave me of what had passed, forwarded my recovery very much. The grief of which the marquis had given such evident proofs made a great impression on me. I found no difficulty in owning to them the occasion of this dangerous illness. They

both condemned my jealousy; and convinced me how unjust it was, by letting me see, that his supposed passion for the countess was no more than a well-contrived expedient to be oftener near me. I likewise gave them to understand, that as much in love as I was, I would never fall into the snare, whereby poor Charlotte, whose adventure they had heard from me, threw herself away. Mademoiselle De Parc was so well pleased to hear my good resolutions, that she took me in her arms, promising never to abandon me, but to secure me from the attempts love might make upon my virtue. The presents she and her niece had received, influenced them to draw very advantageous consequences both for themselves and me. Every thing conspired to flatter my inclinations: my lover was the ordinary subject of our conversation, and every day I heard from him. Such an agreeable situation could not fail by degrees to dispel my apprehensions.

There was nothing now to molest me but the Chevalier D'Elbieux, who gave us trouble enough, coming ten times a day into my room, for which there was no remedy: it not being proper to affront him, as I was in his mother's house, however vexatious his importunity might be. Mademoiselle De Parc afforded me some comfort, by promising she would prevent his having recourse to any violence: however I dreaded the very sight of him, as if my mind foreboded what was to happen.

In the mean time the marquis, whom my governess, without letting me into the secret, had acquainted with the occasion of my illness, wrote a long letter, which she read to me. He there asked my pardon for having been the innocent occasion of it. He solemnly protested against the least affection for the countess; that his only design, in pretending love to her, was to gain opportunities of being near me. The letter contained vows of fidelity, with an assurance that he only waited a proper occasion to give undeniable proofs thereof. I learned, besides, that I should see him the next day, which he acquainted me with, to prevent the effects of a too sudden surprize. I felt an infinite pleasure in hearing the contents of the letter; and though I could not read, I laid it up very carefully, as a convincing proof of the affection it so naturally described.

Mademoiselle

Mademoiselle D'Elbieux sent but once in my illness to enquire how I did. I was at a loss how to account for her aversion to me; but one would have imagined she was displeased with my recovery; and when every one else congratulated me on that occasion, she alone was silent. The countess, her mother, was overjoyed: the chevalier, of late, kept himself within bounds; his behaviour went no farther than what politeness requires in behalf of the fair-sex. I was much delighted, imagining his passion for me was at an end. And now I fancied myself compleatly happy, this change in him being what I had most earnestly desired. But, alas! he soon undeceived me: I found, by woe-ful experience, that one cannot be too much upon one's guard against a man, who on a sudden appears to have laid aside a violent passion; there is always a snake in the grass, which will certainly sting when least expected.

The following day, when the marquis was to come, my governess proposed a walk, saying the air would be of service. She spoke of it at the countess's table, where I sat ever since my illness, though no very acceptable companion to Mademoiselle D'Elbieux. Her brother behaved with exceeding complaisance; and as I imagined he had got the better of his folly, I paid him the deference due to the son of my benefactors. The physician, who still attended me, approved of my taking the air, assuring me that I should find a benefit by it.

After dinner Catharine whispered me, that our walk was a contrivance of her aunt's, in order to meet the marquis. I was pleased with the thought; I was under no apprehension of seeing him, as I had in my company a confidante of the age of Mademoiselle De Parc. Though I was very sensible she acted upon a principle of interest, I had so good an opinion of her as to believe she would not carry her complaisance too far. Her niece, who was sincerity itself, in reckoning up to me her aunt's imperfections, had not forgot the good qualities of which she was mistress.

The heat of the day being over, we went out, directing our walk the way the marquis was to pass. The walk was very pleasant: after half an hour spent in it, we stopped in the wood; from thence we went to rest ourselves

in a little meadow hard by. We had not been there a quarter of an hour, before we heard a whistle. I was startled, but my governess and her niece made slight of it, telling me I need not be under any apprehension in the forest: but in a little time a second signal seemed to answer the first; immediately we heard a noise just by, and turning my head suddenly, I set up a great cry. Four men disguised with masks rushed upon us; and in an instant stopped handkerchiefs into our mouths. After this they bound Mademoiselle De Parc and her niece, then led us about fifty yards from thence, to a bye-place surrounded with a thick coppice, where they left the poor creatures tied to two trees. As for me, I was carried farther off, where three of the men retired, leaving me alone with the fourth; who, throwing off his mask, discovered himself to be the Chevalier D'Elbieux. Imagine my surprize. 'Since nothing but force,' says he, 'will prevail with you, it is fitting you should be treated according to your taste.' He had no sooner done speaking, but he began to offer violence. As they had neglected to tie me, I struggled very hard; and the handkerchief falling off my face, I took that opportunity to cry out as loud as possible, so that the forest rung again. Notwithstanding my resistance, I was upon the point of falling a victim to the wretch's brutality; but Heaven had compassion on my innocence. I heard the noise of a horse's feet galloping up towards us. The villain started at it, and immediately desisted. When he looked behind him, and saw a person coming to my rescue, he poured out a volley of bitter imprecations, running to his pistols that were in the holsters of his saddle. This was too favourable an opportunity to be neglected; accordingly I ran away as fast as I was able. In a moment the noise of their fighting reached me; the report of their pistols, echoing back from all parts of the wood, was very terrible. The consternation I was in stopped me from going any farther; and, overcome as I was with fear, and quite spent with fatigue, I swooned away at the foot of a tree.

The night was far advanced when I came to myself: a cold sweat hung upon my face, and it was with some difficulty I rose from the ground. The
stillness





Plate I.

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stillness and darkness of the night struck a terror into me: the ominous screaming of owls, the howling of wild beasts, and the uncertain glimmering of the stars, all together, had a terrifying effect on my disordered imagination. 'What will become of me?' said I to myself: 'Where am I? Whither shall I go? How shall I escape the fate that pursues me?' Trembling, and doubting of the road, I wandered I knew not where. Every breath of air rustling in the leaves stopped me, and made me start for fear. Where persons are under a consternation, they seem to conspire against themselves; by augmenting their fears; for my part, the least object I could discern, presently became an apparition. Sometimes I ran; then again stood still, and at the least noise hid my face, as if that would diminish my fright. In going along, an owl brushed me with his wings; I gave myself over for lost, and doubled my speed. A stump of a tree caught my gown; I cried out, thinking somebody had seized me, and accordingly went back; but discovering my mistake, as I stooped to disengage myself, the ground gave way under me, and I fell into a pit. Either it was not very deep, or I was exceedingly fortunate in my fall, for I found myself in a sitting posture at the bottom, without any hurt.

What new fears seized me in this unexpected situation may be easily imagined. I gathered myself all in an heap; and, covered with my gown, I poured out a torrent of tears. Soft sleep at last relieved my cares, weighing down my watery eye-lids, and wrapt me in it's balmy sweets for the remaining part of the night.

The dawn of day began to pierce the thickets; the warbling notes welcomed the returning light; when, on a sudden, I started out of my sleep in a fright, much better founded than any of my preceding ones. A wolf, which fear magnified very considerably, was close by me. Our fortunes were much the same; he could not escape the snare which had been laid for him. This terrible sight made me conclude my last hour was come, and accordingly I prayed to God with the greatest fervency. I looked upon this train of misfortunes as a just punishment, by him inflicted upon me, for having too far indulged my inclinations in favour of the mar-

quis. I called upon Heaven with a solemn promise to avoid all occasions of seeing him for the future; and only to listen to it's divine inspirations, if I should escape the dreadful jaws of so fierce an animal.

Danger is certainly a great help to fervent prayer: mine was accompanied with such an ardent affection, and so great a composure of mind, that my circumstances began to be less terrifying. At first I scarce had courage to look at my formidable neighbour; but by degrees I ventured to consider him face to face: his countenance had a cowed, dejected air; he seemed, in a pensive mood, to survey his prison, often out of uneasiness looking towards the top; instinct directing him to seek the means of making his escape. As he walked backwards and forwards, at every turn I imagined he was going to devour me; sometimes he scratched up the earth, and then on a sudden stood without motion: he seemed to listen to some noise; when, changing his place, he crept hastily under my gown. I was so terrified, that I was only able to lift my eyes toward heaven, and what should I see, but a man just going to fire a gun into the pit. This new apparition made me find my tongue again; 'For God's sake,' I cried out, 'spare me, spare me!' — 'What have we here?' said the person looking into the pit: 'Waunds! I had like to have made a fine kettle of fish on it, truly. What do you there, my lass? how came the wolf and you to be trapped together?' — 'In the name of goodness,' replied I, taking heart at what I heard, 'save me, and I will give you a full account!' — 'With all my heart,' answered he; 'have but a minute's patience till I get help; I'll go fetch one of my companions, who is just at hand: in the mean while, you have nothing to fear from the beast, he'll do you no harm; when once a wolf is taken, he is as quiet as a lamb.' Saying this he went off, but presently returned again with the person he mentioned. One of them jumped into the pit and lifted me up; the other, taking me by the hands, drew me out. The first thing I did, was to kiss the ground, and return God thanks for so great an escape.

Whilst I was discharging this duty, my deliverers dispatched my unfortunate fellow-

fellow-prisoner. When they came up to me, one of them, looking at me with great surprize, cried out, 'Good God! what do I see? what a happiness! what a pleasure is this! it is Jenny!' This drew my eyes upon him; and, to my great amazement, I found him to be Colin the woodmonger's son, my first lover, mentioned in the beginning of these Memoirs.

I was so transported as to scream. 'What! is that you, Colin?' said I to him. 'What! is that you, Jenny?' replied he. 'Yes, Colin.' — 'Yes, Jenny.' My first emotion was the effect of joy; it is the natural consequence of being surprized with a sight of those who have been the companions of our childhood: but, upon second thoughts, an aversion succeeded, the reason of which may be easily guessed.

I had promised to inform them how I fell into those dangerous circumstances I had just now escaped; but the sight of Colin made me not over forward to satisfy their curiosity. I contented myself with barely saying, that in flying from some ruffians, I had lost myself in the wood; and endeavouring to find my way back to the castle, I had unfortunately fallen into the pit, by the trap's giving way under me.

'I am very glad,' replied Colin, 'that you have escaped so well; and particularly as I am so happy as to have contributed towards it: but, plague on't, Jenny! I am not very well pleas'd with what went before: your living at the castle sticks in my gizzard; for they say that same paltry marquiss, who brought you the money from the king, is in love with you; this does not answer my purpose; you cannot have forgot what passed between us that day you made me write the love-letter; I spoke to my father, and obtained his consent for marrying you. My friend Christopher here, and I, laid our heads together, and made him believe, in order to gain his consent, that you were to receive every year the same gratuity as that which was so much talked of in our village. This fixed him at last, no longer ago than yesterday; and this morning I ran to the castle to acquaint you with it: but, now I think on it, I heard strange news!'

'What did you hear, Colin?' replied I very earnestly. For I had no

sooner recovered myself from my late fright, but the preceding night's adventure came fresh into my mind, and alarmed me cruelly on the marquiss's account. Terrified with this apprehension, 'What do they say?' cried I. 'People are in search of you,' replied he, 'on all sides; it is said, the chevalier has carried you off, which is thought the more likely, as he has not been seen since he engaged that cur of a marquiss: but I am not a little pleased to think the latter is rightly served for coming between me and home.' — 'How served?' cried I, very earnestly. 'Humh, humh!' continued he, 'you are mightily uneasy me thinks; are you in pain about that? Since it is so, to be even with you for your ill conditions, I'll tell you no more.'

'Keep your secret then to yourself,' I replied, nettled at what he had said: 'Christopher will be more complaisant.' — 'No, I thank you for that,' answered the clown; 'I am on Colin's side: and more than that, you are right enough served, if we pay you in your own coin. Ever since you have been at that same castle, you are grown so proud, you won't so much as look at us poor folk; and if you abate a little of your haughtiness at present, it is only because you can't shift without us. Uddibuddikins! were I in Colin's place, I know what I would do. I would not have you now you are blown upon.'

'So much the better,' replied I very fiercely, overjoyed at having a handle for quarrelling with Colin: 'I am not so mightily taken with his person as you imagine, but that I can easily give up my pretensions; now I have day-light, I can find my way to the castle without your help.'

Colin was surprized at the sharpness of my reply; he was still fond of me. 'Stay, Jenny,' says he, 'I'll shew you the way thither myself. Good God! why should you take thus upon you?' — 'No, no,' continued I, 'you shall not be at the trouble of denying any more requests of mine; I shall learn what has passed without being beholden to you.' Saying this, I offered to go, but was prevented by their laying hold of me. 'Ah, naughty one!' cried Colin, 'you shall not get off so easily: I should not appear so

con-

‘ contemptible in your eye, if you did not meet with encouragement elsewhere; but you would do well to remember Charlotte.’

The sting of this reproach lost nothing of its virulence, and put the last hand to the banishing of all regard for Colin, who till now had some small share in my affections, and that too increased by the assistance I had just received from him. ‘ I should be very sorry,’ says I, ‘ to fall into the circumstances you seem to hint at, and much more to be any ways at your disposal. Let me hear no more of such discourse,’ continued I very sharply; ‘ and don’t pretend to stop me, whom you have no right to detain.’—‘ O, but I have,’ cried Colin: ‘ why, I have your father and mother’s promise, and that is sufficient; and, Miss, since that is your name, you shall go home to your parents. You are very much altered by your quality conversation; but a little of our village air will take down your pride.’ Upon this, making a sign to Christopher, they seized each of them an arm, and dragged me along.

I was forced to follow, though with tears in my eyes. ‘ Look, Christopher,’ cries Colin, ‘ how she takes on! I could pity her, but that I know the occasion of her sorrow; it is only because she is like to lose her dear marquis. Were they mistaken, who said there was a good understanding between them? Her behaviour makes it as plain as a nose on a man’s face. One would think she might be overjoyed at the thoughts of seeing her father and mother and neighbours again: but she, forsooth, can’t so much as bear to hear them named. Well, well, Jenny, you have no bad luck to come among us again: we have no laced coats, it is true, but we may be every jot as good as the fine sparks you admire so much; and, besides, let me tell ye, your godmother has spoke her mind; she says, she will have no more to do with you, after what has happened; this makes a great deal of noise in the neighbourhood, and every one lays the blame upon you.’

This piece of news, which he undesignedly acquainted me withal, went to my heart, and brought a thousand things at once to my imagination. I valued

my reputation; and the thoughts of returning to our village under an infamous character, put me upon the rack. The tenderness with which I loved my mother, staggered my resolution: methought I saw her bewailing my absence and uncertain condition; the next moment I fancied her with a severe countenance, reproaching me as guilty of what had happened. ‘ I shall be used ill at home,’ said I to myself, ‘ and shall not dare to go abroad to be the mark of every pointing finger: who knows but that miscreant, the Chevalier D’Elbieux, will lay wait for me, and take an opportunity of effecting his hellish designs! What resistance can we make? Heavens, to what am I exposed!’ These reflections determined me to make my escape as soon as possible, and shelter myself in Paris, where a service would be infinitely preferable to the having of Colin for a husband, who had treated me with so much harshness. I intended, when settled, to give my mother the reasons of my not returning home.

I was employed in these thoughts, when there appeared in the road a man on horseback; as he rode at a great pace, he soon came up with us. ‘ Did you see,’ says he as he drew near, ‘ a young—Ah! what do I see?’ cried he in discovering me: it is her.—Is that you, Miss Jenny? What a happiness to find you again! what a satisfaction will this be to my master!’ As he said this, he alighted, and came to me presenting his hand. How great was my joy to find it was the marquis’s valet de chambre! The presence of my vigilant conductors could not prevent my giving him evident proofs of my satisfaction. Dubois, in his transports, had taken my hand in order to kiss it; but Colin interposed, and thrust him aside, crying out, ‘ Not so fast, friend; if you are for kissing, you had best go to the person you wrote the letter to. I know you well enough, for all you pretend to be surprized.’—‘ Is this any of your relations?’ said the valet de chambre to me. ‘ No, indeed,’ answered I very quick. ‘ Why what would the fool be at?’ continued Dubois, still holding my hand. ‘ Not so fast, I tell you, friend,’ added Colin; ‘ we are not afraid of your laced hat; and, as much countrymen as we are, we bid you defiance.’—‘ Oh, ho!’ cried Du-

bois, 'what, are you for being obstreperous, my puts?'—'Waunds! put yourself,' replied Colin in a passion; 'as if we did not know who you are.' In saying this, he seized Christopher's gun; and stepping back, 'Udsbuddikins,' says he, 'go your ways, or I'll turn you up as I would a hare.' Dubois was a man of courage, and had seen a battle; so this threat did not daunt him in the least; but putting the muzzle of the gun aside, he laid hold of Colin. Christopher seeing his companion overpowered, let go his hold of me in order to assist him: finding myself at liberty, I fled from them as fast as my strength could carry me.

After having passed through a considerable part of the wood without finding any path or road, at last I came to one, where meeting a woman driving two asses before her, I ran up very hastily to her. She immediately asked me what was the matter, and the reason of my precipitate flight. I made a story; and told her I ran from my master, who would have had me complied with what was not proper. 'I approve of your discretion,' said the good woman to me, 'and for it's sake will bestir myself in your behalf: if you want a place, my dear, follow me; I have a daughter at Paris, to whom I'll recommend you; as she is in a good place, she may be serviceable to you. She has not been long there; these are her cloaths I am carrying to Valvins, where I am told I shall meet with an opportunity of sending them to her. You may, if you will, take the same convenience; consider what you had best to do.'

The notion I immediately conceived of escaping the pursuit which would infallibly be made after me, the avoiding such discourse as I had just heard, and still rung in my ears, with the pleasing thoughts of living near the marquis, soon determined me. 'I am much beholden to you,' said I to her, 'for your kind proffer, and accept of it very willingly.'—'Well,' says she, 'I'll speak to the carrier; and if you can't pay the fare, I'll lay down the money, and you may repay it to my daughter when you are able.'

When my mother came to the castle, she had given me about twelve livres to buy some little things which girls have occasion for: I had the money about

me, and told the woman I hadi where-withal to bear my charges. 'So much the better,' replied she; 'money is no burden; and it were to be wished always to have a little at hand: this might often prevent mischief, where young creatures like you, to extricate themselves from difficulties, fall into the snares laid for the ruin of their honour.'

We had walked about two miles, talking in this manner, when my guide proposed taking a breakfast. I was overjoyed to hear of eating, being almost famished. Out of a little wallet she pulled some bacon and bread; we seated ourselves in the shade of some willows on the bank of a clear rivulet. The asses, according to their nature, stopped very willingly to graze. I thought the bacon very delicious; and even to this day, whenever I lose my stomach, the very remembrance of that rustick meal never fails to give me an appetite and a relish to my victuals.

Whilst we thus refreshed ourselves, the good woman looked at me very earnestly: the tears began to trickle down apace, whilst the victuals remained in her mouth. 'Alas, Goody!' I cried, 'what is the matter? you seem troubled.'—'Ah!' says she, wiping her eyes, 'you put me so much in mind of my daughter Mariana that is dead and gone! She was about your age, and very like you. Would to God she had been less handsome; for it was her beauty that brought her to the grave: poor girl, she was no less amiable for her virtue! I'll tell you her whole history as we go along, and then judge whether I have not just reason to grieve as often as she comes into my mind.'

Breakfast being over, we went forwards. The good woman, remembering her promise, 'Be attentive,' says she, 'Silviana,' for I took that name when I first joined her, 'to what I am going to say; it may be of some advantage to you. Young women are often courted; and yet how few do we see possessed of that discretion they ought to have, since nothing can be an equivalent for their virtue! It is true, I bemoan myself every day for the loss of Mariana, but I had much rather think her happy in heaven, than see her covered with infamy on earth. Where honour is the only thing

thing a person can value herself upon, she never can do too much to secure it. For example, if any one should rob you of the little money that is in your pocket, you would lose all you have, and would certainly think yourself undone; it is the same with regard to honour.

These were the sentiments in which I trained my daughter: and the good effect they produced as she grew up gave me great content. By the time she was twelve years of age, the whole neighbourhood admired her. Though Fontainebleau is not very large, yet the king's coming thither every year, draws a great concourse of people. In that season I deal in lemonades; and, as I am very choice in what I sell, my house is generally full of very good company.

I was cruelly perplexed in seeing my daughter visibly waste away through some hidden grief, the cause of which I could not possibly divine. She was now eighteen, and every day dearer than other; so that her pining in this manner overwhelmed me with trouble. As for myself, I thought I had no ways contributed towards it, being ready even to prevent her wishes in every thing I knew was agreeable to her; and as her passion for dress was no secret to me, I supplied her very plentifully with means to indulge herself in it: so that few young women of her condition made a better appearance. All this signified nothing. Melancholy still prevailed. I often pressed her to acquaint me with the cause, but she pretended to be ignorant of it herself; till at last she was so ill as to take to her bed. I shut up shop immediately, that I might not be interrupted in tending upon her. Nothing was wanting that could any way help her recovery; physicians were sent for, but they could not find out her distemper: in a word, my heart was ready to break when I saw her thus reduced.

One day finding herself something better than usual, I pressed her so earnestly to acquaint me with the occasion of her illness, that, fetching a deep sigh, she spoke to me in the following manner. "Your tenderness, dear mother, lays me under an indispensable obligation of satisfying you on this subject; besides, it cannot be deferred any longer. I find I must

shortly give an account of my whole life to the Almighty, and I should think it an addition to my guilt not to acknowledge to you my weakness. Can there be a greater than to fall in love with a man, and then inform him of it? The violence of my passion has brought me to this condition. Oh, mother! do not blush for me: the grave will expiate this involuntary offence."

"No, my dear child, no," said I to her, moved with compassion at the fear of losing her; "God will preserve you, and pardon your weakness; he will second your virtuous education; I will prevail upon Heaven by my earnest prayers to restore you to me. Dear child! I can never outlive thee." — "Your sincere piety," replied she, "will enable you to bear our separation: for my sake, dear mother, dry up your tears; they pierce me to the very heart."

She cried, too, dear girl! — Ah, Sylvia, continued the good woman, how I was moved! Methought the tears I shed on that occasion were the forerunners of those that would bewail her death. We continued some time in this melancholy situation; till at last my daughter, with a presence of mind surpassing her tender age, and edifying me by her resignation and pious expressions, thus addressed herself to me.

"You may remember, dear mother, that being out of order one evening, you was obliged to go to bed earlier than usual. As I was alone, I took up a book to amuse myself till the time of shutting shop: the passage I chanced to dip into affected me so much as to draw tears from my eyes; it was the history of Hypolite. Fatal day! dangerous book for young persons, leaving the mind susceptible of the softest impressions! Just at that moment came into the shop two young gentlemen, one of whom was beauty itself: they called for some liquor cooled with ice; and the person I just now described, behaved and spoke with such inimitable grace, as charmed and troubled me both at once. He perceived I had been crying, and having informed himself of the occasion, "How amiable you appear," said he to me, "when to such enchanting beauty is joined a tender-
ness

“ nefs capable of moving you thus at
 “ the misfortunes of others! You weep,
 “ then, for the Count De Douglas? Happy
 “ man! Who could not envy him
 “ on this occasion? Learn from hence,
 “ if any one should be so much ena-
 “ moured with you, as that count was
 “ with Julia, not to make him wretch-
 “ ed. For if the casual reading of such
 “ a passage could thus affect you, judge
 “ from thence what a lover must endure
 “ overwhelmed with your severities.”

“ The young gentleman’s friend,
 “ such he appeared to be, interrupted
 “ him in his discourse; whether by de-
 “ sign, or that he had really business,
 “ I cannot say: but he made an ex-
 “ cuse for going elsewhere, promising
 “ to call upon him as soon as the affair
 “ was dispatched.

“ Thus was I left alone with the
 “ gentleman. I know not whether he
 “ expressed himself in a better manner
 “ than those who have hitherto made
 “ their addresses, or that my heart,
 “ softened by the fatal passage I had
 “ just been reading, was in that situa-
 “ tion in which the assaults of love
 “ find the least resistance; whatever
 “ was the cause, it received the impres-
 “ sion, even before he declared his pas-
 “ sion; nay, that nothing might be
 “ wanting to compleat my shame, I
 “ did not conceal my overthrow. His
 “ transport was so great, that he threw
 “ himself at my feet, kissed my hand,
 “ and gave a thousand other respectful
 “ marks of his love. I blush to think
 “ I could be so weak as to suffer it,
 “ and feel from thence an unworthy
 “ satisfaction. Ah, mother! why did
 “ you leave me alone? Could you not
 “ foresee that one single moment is more
 “ than sufficient for triumphing over
 “ the reason of a young creature.

“ In the mean time it grew late; the
 “ shop was still open, I remember: I
 “ was for taking leave of the young
 “ gentleman, and obliging him to re-
 “ tire; but the ingrate seemed to be so
 “ much troubled, and that with such an
 “ air of sincerity, that I was moved at it.
 “ One quarter of an hour I could not
 “ refuse; his life, he said, depended on
 “ it. Unhappy complaisance, which
 “ every young woman ought to banish!
 “ He improved it to his advantage, by
 “ giving fresh tokens of his love; his
 “ soft voice, his lively expression, his
 “ languishing eyes, could not fail of in-

“ fecting my troubled mind. “ Alas!
 “ you love me, Sir!” said I to him;
 “ and I could not refrain from letting
 “ you know, you are the first I ever suf-
 “ fered to entertain me with such dis-
 “ courie: shall I not repent hereafter
 “ the disclosing myself in this manner?
 “ In all appearance your condition is
 “ far superior to mine; what effect,
 “ then, can be expected from our mu-
 “ tual affection, or to what purpose will
 “ you have conquered my inclinations?
 “ Oh! leave me: I blame myself al-
 “ ready for having listened to you so
 “ long!”—“ How!” replied he, with
 “ an air of melancholy; “ do you think
 “ me capable of abusing so much good-
 “ ness? Wretch that I am, to be so
 “ little known to you! No, my charm-
 “ ing Mariana, could my breast har-
 “ bour so vile a thought, this hand, at
 “ the expence of my life, should avenge
 “ your cause. To you I vow an eter-
 “ nal constancy, preferable to whatever
 “ the world can shew of state and gran-
 “ deur. Neither is my condition so
 “ much above yours, as you seem to
 “ imagine: I belong to the Count of
 “ —, and have a fair prospect of mak-
 “ ing my fortune, perhaps very shortly;
 “ and, such as it proves, I am ready to
 “ share it with you.” These senti-
 “ ments gave me new courage; a young
 “ woman is never startled at love when
 “ founded on a principle of virtue and
 “ esteem; yet how nice a point is it at
 “ this day to listen too much to it’s
 “ suggestions! How frequently do vil-
 “ lains abuse this honourable pretext to
 “ the ruin of young creatures! A rock
 “ on which innocence is daily cast
 “ away.

“ We parted with regret, and this
 “ first interview confirmed to him an
 “ eternal fidelity on my side: I went
 “ to bed full of what had passed, and
 “ composed myself to rest with a satis-
 “ faction and serenity of mind I had
 “ never before experienced.

“ Pardon me, dear mother,” said the
 “ good creature, “ for carrying on so
 “ very privately this intrigue, during the
 “ space of six months. My lover gave
 “ me to understand, that as yet it was
 “ not convenient to disclose the secret
 “ to you; that his affairs were on the
 “ point of being concluded; and insisted
 “ on having the satisfaction of inform-
 “ ing you himself. The reasons he gave
 “ for his conduct were so satisfactory
 “ (at

"(at least they appeared such to me)
 "that I even contrived opportunities
 "for his seeing me, and keeping the
 "affair from your knowledge.

"I waited with great tranquillity the
 "happy moment, in which so tender
 "an amour was to be crowned with
 "success; I relied entirely on his ho-
 "nour. Vain confidence! as if men
 "were capable of any such thing!

"One night, about ten, my lover
 "came to me. "My lovely Mariana,"
 "says he, "I am obliged to leave you,
 "and my mind misgives me, that ab-
 "sence from you will certainly bring
 "me to the grave; restore my mind
 "to its usual tranquillity. Yes," says
 "he, throwing himself at my feet, and
 "bathing my hand with his tears;
 "I am the most forlorn of mankind, if
 "you deny me the favour I am going
 "to ask. The restraint I have laid on
 "myself, my respect for you, have
 "made me undergo more than tongue
 "can express for these six months past;
 "and can you let me go without securing
 "to me my only happiness? Either
 "kill me at once, or promise to make
 "me happy."—"I need not inform
 "you," replied I, moved at the condi-
 "tion I saw him in, "that I love you
 "more than life; nevertheless, what is
 "it you dare to ask?"—"Alas! Maria-
 "na," replied he with warmth, "my de-
 "sires know no other measure than that
 "of my love of you!"—"Of yourself,"
 "replied I, "the indulging your own
 "appetites; without reflecting, that it
 "must be at the expence of all that is
 "most dear to me in the world, my
 "honour, my reputation, my peace."
 "—"What is it you mean!" cried he,
 "lifting up his eyes toward heaven;
 "to whom are all these dearer than to
 "me? Do you know me, and yet use
 "such expressions? No, Mariana, in-
 "jure me not so cruelly, as to think me
 "capable of so black a crime: your
 "heart long since has declared itself in
 "my behalf, that is security enough for
 "the uprightness of my intentions; it
 "is your consent to marry me, I ask:
 "to-morrow must make me yours; or,
 "by all that is sacred, I am gone for
 "ever."

"I trembled to hear so solemn a pro-
 "testation; (how weak are we when
 "entangled in love!) I sighed, he urged
 "his request, and at last gained my con-
 "sent to marry him privately. The

reasons he alledged were of great con-
 sequence; his ruin was inevitable,
 "he said, should his master discover
 "that he designed to marry, and to ob-
 "tain his consent would take up too
 "much time. "Let us first secure the
 "main point," says he, "and I'll work
 "through the rest: if he should find
 "out that we are married, at least I
 "shall be the better able to stand by
 "you, and have a sufficient excuse for
 "leaving his service."

"Don't you remember, dear mother,
 "that I asked your leave to visit an aunt
 "about six miles off? It was under that
 "pretext that I was to go to be mar-
 "ried; every thing was prepared,
 "and we parted in that expectation. I
 "had never loved him so much before,
 "nor ever given him such convincing
 "proofs. Heavens! that in one mo-
 "ment so fair a prospect should vanish,
 "and the blackest of treasons come to
 "light!

"As my lover went out of the shop,
 "two young gentlemen, exceedingly
 "well dressed, met him at the door. He
 "was no sooner gone, but one said to
 "the other, "Was not that the Mar-
 "quis of ——— who passed us?"—"Yes,"
 "answered the other: "don't speak so
 "loud. He squeezed me by the hand
 "when I was going to salute him: there
 "is some mystery carrying on; I sup-
 "pose he makes love to Mariana." I
 "no sooner heard this, but I stood close
 "to the partition between the shop and
 "closet, the place we used to meet in;
 "I could hear all that passed, and or-
 "dered the maid to serve them, bidding
 "her say I was gone to bed, if any ask-
 "ed for me. I placed myself so con-
 "veniently, as not to lose one word of
 "their discourse.

"I should easily believe it," said one
 "of the gentlemen, in answer to some-
 "thing that had passed between them;
 "but Mariana is discreet, and I can't
 "think she has granted him the last
 "favour."—"So!" replied the other,
 "are you weak enough to imagine Joan
 "can say nay to a lord? Of twenty girls
 "of her rank, are not nineteen caught
 "in our nets? Your over-favourable
 "opinion imposes upon you. I am
 "surprized at it."—"You may banter
 "as you please," answered the first:
 "I'll allow you to be right as to the
 "generality of them, but as to her we
 "are speaking of, I know to a demon-
 "stration

“stration she is a modest girl. A person of figure offered her very considerably, even proposed to settle upon her, but to no purpose.” — “It may be,” replied he that knew so little of me; “but can you imagine she would refuse a person of our rank, who should propose marriage to her? How can she avoid that snare? You little think that the marquis, in conducting an affair of this nature, sets so many engines at work, that he seldom fails of success; he does not stick at marrying a girl he fancies, under a borrowed name: perhaps that is the case here.”

“Imagine, dear mother, my surprize and indignation. “Ah, villain!” I cried out, not reflecting where I was. — “We are overheard,” said one of the gentlemen, “and by Mariana herself.” — “I am very sorry for it,” replied the other; “we must prevail upon her not to speak of what she has heard.” Upon this they rushed into the closet, where they found me all in tears.

“They used their utmost endeavours to comfort me: but I was ashamed to look them in the face, as if what I had heard made me guilty. They urged me very earnestly to inform them what terms I was upon with the marquis; and as they appeared very much like gentlemen, in consideration of the invaluable service they had done, by giving me so much light into the affair, I related to them the whole detail of my adventure. They seemed to credit what I said: I use that expression, because when they went away, I could hear them say, they knew the world better than that. But before they left me, I was obliged to promise not to give them up as the authors of my information: and I was as good as my word. Their backs were no sooner turned, but I threw myself into bed, under an agony not to be expressed. I spent the night in contriving means of absenting myself from the place appointed. In vain did love plead for a perfidious man; my resolution was never to see him more: a dear-bought victory! His idea always maintained its place in my breast, not to be removed. The struggles I that night underwent were so violent, as to throw me into a fit of sickness.

“The day following, our maid, whom he had gained, brought me a letter from the wretch; I sent it back unopened, and as I thought this a fresh attempt upon my honour, I ordered him to be told, I would hear no more of him. A second letter came; I behaved as I did with respect to the first: the villain finding he lost his labour that way, sent me word by the maid, that he had things of the last consequence to impart, very much to my advantage, and begged I would not condemn him unheard. I was so provoked at the servant’s insolence, having before reprimanded her severely on account of the former message, that I prevailed with you, under some other pretence, to turn her away, as you may remember.

“In a very few days after this, I was terribly surprized one morning when I waked, to find my perfidious lover kneeling at my bed-side, and bathing one of my hands with his guilty tears: I snatched it away with too much confusion not to discover the ascendent he still had over my affections.

“Well, then, charming Mariana, you no longer love me,” said he, with an air the most moving; “you refuse to see or hear me; you banish those who might inform you of my faithful ardour. Heavens! that so much beauty and injustice can be so near allied! What is my crime? Is it the concealing my real name? If so, I own myself the Marquis — I should not have denied it. What a misfortune, to have a more exquisite taste than the generality of mankind! to this I owe my wretched condition; this has torn from me all that was dear in the world! Who is to blame, Mariana or I? Why did she not keep her word? why did she not come to the place appointed? There she might have discovered whether it was the Marquis of — or his secretary that would have married her. Ah, lovely Mariana! why did you deprive me the uncommon pleasure of so agreeably undecieving you, by presenting a husband worthy of so much merit? Endeavouring pleasure! I had proposed to be personally beloved, and not beholden for the mighty gift of rank or fortune. Such is my crime: I have done

"done; pronounce my doom. This justification I owed myself, and now have paid my debt; placed as I am on the brink of destruction, I will not survive the cruel misfortune of having been suspected."

"How weak are we when entangled with love! His words made an impression on me; they were plausible, and my heart, through prepossession, pleaded in behalf of the traitor. But Reason came to my assistance; I could not forget the discourse I had overheard: they had no interest in the affair, being neither his enemies nor rivals; this last reflection carried it, and I would hear no more. The ingrate committed numberless extravagancies; he offered to kill himself, putting me a thousand times in apprehension for his life: as much an impostor as I thought him, I could not overcome my fears. Somebody very luckily entering my room, he retired; and, convinced I was not to be deluded by his forgeries, freed me once for all from his company."

"He was no sooner gone, but I blamed my too great severity; the specious pretence under which he veiled his wicked designs presented itself again. "What a wretch am I, if I have wronged him! Perhaps he really loves me; perhaps he tells the truth: stay, charmer, I'll clear these frightful doubts." I thought of a thousand ways to lay open this interesting mystery; but, alas! what I had heard proved but too true! I chanced to meet with one of the unhappy instances of his too successful villainy; she convinced me I had placed my affections on a monster. I often blushed to think of my narrow escape, but still loved him to excess, and suffered cruelly on that account. Time might, it is true, have worn out my passion, had not his behaviour to me about a week since put the finishing stroke to a wretched life."

"For so lately was it, that a person exceedingly well dressed came into my chamber; he enquired if I was Mariana, and being answered I was the person, "Would to God," said he, "another had been employed on this occasion! your countenance at first sight gains one over to you. My Lord Marquis of ——— to-morrow is to marry Miss ———. This young

lady has heard of several amours of her intended spouse; among the rest, she has been informed, that he has conversed with you as a wife, and some do not stick to say he was privately married to you. This has occasioned a demur; the lady will go no farther in this affair, till she receives entire satisfaction on this point: a person will come from her to you for an answer, on which this marriage absolutely depends. The marquis has sworn he is a stranger to your bed, but she refuses to rely on his protestation, and has given him to understand, that if he has deceived you, as she is informed, that the match must be broke off. The marquis, who doats on her, is in the utmost consternation, and sends me to assure you, that if you prove an obstacle to his designs, and refuse to behave on this occasion as is proper, he will find a place for you where you may repent your obstinacy at leisure, and that——" "Go, go, Sir!" replied I, interrupting him, and provoked at such menaces; "tell him, who has honoured you with such a notable commission, I scorn him too much to concern myself with his new engagements; however, I could not have imagined, that after having been guilty of so many impostures, with which I am better acquainted than he thinks for, he should crown the work with a shameful threatening message to a young person he had offered to marry." Saying this, I turned my back upon the gentleman, who went away much astonished at my haughty behaviour.

"But, vain haughtiness, useless outside appearance! A thousand times was I torn to pieces with bitter regret, too plainly convincing me of the excess of my passion. My lover gone for ever! I am not only abandoned, but even sacrificed to a rival; nay, insulted and trampled on by his ungenerous and outrageous menaces! This it is, dear mother, that thus preys upon me, and has reduced me to such a woeeful condition. What is the whole world to me? the marquis is married, and all is over!"

"Her tears put an end to this melancholy relation. I endeavoured to comfort her, and restore her health; but the illness increasing, about ten days

‘ afterwards she spoke to me in the following manner, and that with a presence of mind which surprized me, overwhelmed as I was with tears, and holding her in my arms.

“ My hour approaches,” said she, “ and we must part. I find I have not long to live: comfort yourself, my dear mother, and don’t oppress me with your sorrow. Nature is too apt to shrink in this conflict: add not the weight your tenderness will occasion; but if you love me, refrain giving me so many marks of it; they shake that steadiness which now I stand in need of more than ever. Have recourse to God, and beseech him in my behalf; in his mercy I place my trust: above all, thank him for having preserved my innocence through so many dangers. What a comfort! That treasure, at least, I shall carry to the next life. Let me conjure you, in the name of God, to leave me to myself during those precious moments he is still pleased to allow me, that I may employ them wholly in the great affair of salvation. Receive this last kiss, and pardon the uneasiness I give you. Farewel, dear mother, you move me too much!”

Saying this, she turned her head away, and would not be disturbed afterwards. She died as she lived; that is, in such sentiments of piety, as afford me a singular consolation. After some time, I submitted myself to the Divine Providence. Alas! it cost me dear, and does still every day of my life.’

Mariana’s mother wept bitterly in concluding this mournful history. I was much moved, and cried very heartily. The favourable opinion she had of me, was considerably increased by seeing such marks of my tender affection, and she expressed as much in a very sincere manner. Reflections naturally succeeded, which confirmed me more and more in a steady adherence to virtue: I could not forbear thinking this relation was designed as a preservative against the dangers to which my innocence would be exposed at Paris.

Wereached Valvins, and meeting with the conveniency mentioned before, we agreed with the waggoner for my fare. The old woman and I embraced each other with great affection, promising a mutual correspondence for the future.

I was no sooner alone in the waggon,

but I gave a loose to many a melancholy reflection. ‘Heavens!’ said I to myself, ‘what am I doing? what will become of me? What will people think? what will my mother say? What! can I leave a mother bewailing my absence at this very instant? No, no; I’ll go no farther,’ cried I, all in tears; ‘I had better undergo the reproaches I so much dread, than expose myself again to those very dangers I have so happily escaped. Yes, dear mother, had I never left you, but had remained under your eye, I should not this day be involved in so many difficulties.’

This made a deep impression; I resolved to return to the village, and rather submit my vanity to the greatest humiliation, than be thus wanting in my duty to my parents. I was just going to bid the waggoner set me down, and was actually preparing to alight, when I saw a man riding full speed after us; my mind misgave me: but how great was my surprize when I could distinguish his face, and discovered it was the chevalier D’Elbieux! I trembled, as well I might, from head to foot, and immediately hid myself under a coverlet that was designed to keep me from the rain: I lay thus perdue above an hour, without the least motion. At last I grew impatient, and not being able to bear the cruel incertitude any longer, I lifted up the corner of the coverlet. Heavens! what should I see but the chevalier still following the waggon, and holding a discourse with him that drove it. What a situation was I in! Which way should I turn myself in this distress! I knew him too well, not to apprehend the worst of extremities from his brutality. How should he come this way? Who should direct him hither? What might I not expect, if he knew I was so near him.

This racking mystery soon cleared up; another young gentleman came galloping up to the chevalier. ‘I have had no better success than you,’ says he, calling out as he came towards us; ‘I can hear nothing of what we are looking for.’ Monsieur D’Elbieux only put his finger on his mouth, and pointed to the waggon. This sign implied a great deal, for it plainly shewed where I lay hid. When he came up with us, ‘Take heed,’ said the chevalier to him in a low voice, ‘we have her; she can’t escape this bout: I don’t

'don't know what it is, but she suspects something; you see how she hides herself.' The winding of the road prevented me hearing any more. God was pleased to inspire me a contrivance for escaping. Heaven never forsakes the innocent.

In about half an hour after this, the waggon drove into the wood again. The remembrance of what I had there been exposed to threw me into a fit of trembling. The road happened to be very bad, the depth of the ruts made it exceeding troublesome riding. This forced the gentlemen to quit the great road, and strike into a path, so as to leave part of the thicket between them and the waggon. Such an opportunity was not to be lost; but as I apprehended the waggoner, by his slow driving, to be in the secret, I could expect no assistance from him. There hung over the road several large boughs; one of these I laid hold of, and the waggon driving from under me, I climbed into a large thick tree, fully resolved to hide myself there till I might venture to make off. The road here was straight, and I could see a long way before me.

I was soon convinced of what importance it was, not to let slip the opportunity Heaven had put into my hands. I could see the waggon at some distance, with the horsemen close by it: the waggoner retired, and the gentlemen quitted their horses. One of them, but which I could not discern, got upon the carriage; he lifts up the coverlet, and seems vastly surprized not to find me there, looking about on all sides. He jumps down again, they both mount their horses, seem to confer together, and then ride off, taking different roads.

I was fully determined not to leave my post, till I was sure of not falling into their hands a second time. Two hours were passed and nothing appeared. I began to be in good heart, when I heard somebody say, 'It is to no purpose to search for her at such a distance; she can't be gone so far, but must be hid somewhere hereabouts: let us look out sharp where we are; this is the place we lost her in. Do you place yourself where the roads cross, and I'll stay upon this rising ground, from whence I can see a long way about me.' This information was of great service to me, as I should otherwise have

ventured down, and infallibly have fallen into their clutches.

Night drew on apace, the sun was already set, and I suffered very much from continuing so long in such an uneasy posture. My strength, as well as patience, was quite exhausted, when there passed by a chaise escorted by two horsemen; in it sat a lady and a girl. The moment I saw them I resolved to quit the tree, and take that opportunity of escaping the danger which hung over me. But in putting my design into execution, had the ill fortune to hook the upper part of my gown in the tree, and losing my footing at the same time, I was left dangling in the air. The fear of falling made me cry out, which brought the two horsemen attending the chaise, and who were then just by, to my assistance; they presently disengaged and took me down. 'Good God!' said one of them, 'pretty maid, why do you expose yourself to such danger? You must certainly be very fond of birds, to run this hazard in taking their nests.' I had not time to make any reply; the Chevalier D'Elbieux, who had heard my voice, was posting towards us. I ran with all my force to the chaise, which my outcries had stopped, and calling out from some distance to the lady, 'Save me, Madam, for God's sake,' I cried, 'a villain offers me violence!' The lady looked at me very earnestly whilst I was speaking; for my cloaths, though I was dressed like a country girl, together with my behaviour, had something so very particular, as to interest her in my behalf. 'With all my heart, poor child,' said she; 'help her in; it were a pity any mischief should befall her.' She had the good-nature to make room for me; the little girl was placed in my lap; I began to take courage, and the chaise drove on.

When I was seated, she enquired who I was, and the occasion of my fears. I related all the particulars with great sincerity, excepting my inclination to the marquis. After she had heard me with great attention; 'This is wickedness with a vengeance!' cried she at the end of my story, 'and plainly shews how dangerous is the company of men destitute of honour, where they take a fancy. Mothers ought never to leave their daughters to themselves,

'nor should young girls, who value their character, ever take the least step without their mother's advice. However, child, you have nothing to fear from the chevalier. I don't believe he dare molest you while I am by; neither would my servants suffer any such thing, if he should attempt it. The countess I am well acquainted with; and, when I write to her on this subject, will reprimand her son very severely.' She had scarce done speaking, when I perceived the chevalier riding by the chaise-side, and looking in very earnestly. 'Ah, Madam,' said I in a low voice, 'there he is, there he is.'—'Don't be frightened,' she replied, 'I'll warrant his stay will be but short.'

'Chevalier D'Elbieux,' says she, raising her voice, 'pray come hither! I am a particular acquaintance of the countess your mother; and, as such, am willing to give you a little good advice.' He no sooner heard these words, but, giving the reins and spurs to his horse, he rode away.

'Well, Jenny, did not I tell you how it would be?' continued she; 'we have a fair riddance of him. As to the rest, make yourself easy; you shall remain with me till I have wrote to the countess your godmother, and her answer will determine what is to be done.'

I blessed God very heartily for this happy meeting. My protectress appeared to be about forty, was still handsome, but the sweetness of her temper can never be sufficiently admired. I strove, by all the little services I could think of on the road, to endear myself to her. My labour was not thrown away; by the time we reached Paris I had gained not a little on her affections.

The house where we were set down was extremely well furnished; it was her own; and her name, as I soon learned, Madame De G——; her husband a receiver in the exchequer. Every thing was magnificent; and the number of their servants spoke their wealth. The lady had three waiting women, besides a governess for her daughter, who was about ten years old.

Her husband had not so many attendants; his dress was very plain; a great economist in his family affairs, but generous to profuseness in regard of his private pleasures.

The lady introduced me to him as soon as we arrived, but he seemed to take little or no notice of what she said in my commendation. 'It is very well,' says he; 'how have you enjoyed your health in the country?' But, without staying for her answer, he retired to his closet, giving me a look, as he passed by, which did not seem to be so unconcerned as his conversation.

The receiver was between fifty and threescore; he was well made, with an engaging aspect. I found afterwards he was very rich, and much given to women; but withal so cautious, that few or none of his intrigues are come to light. Every one has his humour; this gentleman's ambition was to pass for one who had overcome the common frailties of mankind.

The lady had wrote to the countess as soon as we got home; I made it my business to ingratiate myself more and more to her, and she seemed to love me with great affection. Her daughter was taught writing and musick: the good lady was pleased to order I should make use of that opportunity for my improvement. As my voice was naturally very agreeable, it was soon taken notice of. As for writing, in a short time I was able to hold a correspondence, which gave me no small satisfaction: for I was no sooner rid of my fears, but all my resolutions to forget the marquis were by degrees entirely forgot.

One morning whilst I was studying in a little room, which was allotted to my use, a footman of the lady's came to call me to her; I made what haste I could, and upon entering the room, 'Sit down, Jenny,' says she; 'I have received some letters which concern you, I am willing you should know their contents.'

She spoke with such a serious air, as made the blood run cold in my veins; I listened to her with fear and trembling.

'This,' continued she, 'is from your godmother: the countess speaks very well of you, but she informs me of some things I do not approve of your being acquainted withal; your heart is tender, and it may not be proper to revive your former sentiments.'

This was more than sufficient to excite my curiosity; however, I dissembled my eagerness, but was determined

to get hold of the letter, that I might upriddle this mystery.

'The other,' continued she, 'is from my god-daughter, who thinks quite otherwise of her brother the chevalier, with regard to you; she advises me to look narrowly to you, and says it is her affection for me which makes her give me this caution. Miss D'Elbieux tells me you are a great dissembler, very vain, and very malicious; that you was within a small way of being the occasion of much mischief; that by your affectation you had inveigled the love of the Marquis of L. V. that he had fought upon your account; in fine, that she much apprehended your stay in my house would be attended with some fatal consequence, which, too late, might make me repent I had ever received you. That the Marquis of L. V. father to him who was wounded, exclaims bitterly against you, as the promoter of that danger his son's life was in, whose recovery was very much doubted.'

I strove exceedingly with myself, in order to stifle the vexation this letter gave me, and the grief I conceived at the desperate condition of my wounded lover. Notwithstanding my endeavours, the tears gushed out; it was in vain to hide them; the lady too plainly saw my trouble.

'You are in tears, Jenny,' said she, looking steadfastly at me; 'that convinces me one part of the letter is true; and as for the rest, I give no credit to it: the prejudice is too rank, and I plainly see my god-daughter has taken an antipathy to you. I am at a loss to account for it, as you appear to be sweet-tempered; and I do not find the least resemblance in the character she has drawn, unless you are the greatest dissembler upon earth.'

I shed a torrent of tears at these words. 'Recover yourself,' said she; 'I did not send for you to give you this uneasiness; behave yourself well, and I will take care of you.'

I was going out of the room, when she called me back. 'Now I think on it,' says she, 'your father and mother would have you return home: but you shall be your own mistress to go or stay.'—'Ah, Madam!' cried I, 'as much as I love them—' 'Well,

well,' says this amiable lady, interrupting me, 'I see you have some reasons for not complying with their orders: make yourself easy, you shall stay where you are.'

I retired, quite overcome with so much goodness. In going from her apartment, the receiver met me. 'What is the matter, my pretty girl?' says he, stopping me; 'has any one been talking you to task? I shall be very angry with my wife; for, except her, nobody here dare use you ill. But be comforted, I will put things upon a better footing; I have been thinking some time of making your fortune.'—'I am much obliged to you, Sir,' answered I; 'your lady's being pleased to bear with me, demands a greater return than I can possibly make. I have all the reason in the world to be satisfied with her goodness.'—'Not too much of that, I believe,' says he; 'you would scarce cry for nothing: some other time I shall enquire farther into this matter; we are not in a proper place to talk any longer; farewell.' Saying this, he squeezed my hand, and went to his lady.

I was no longer so dull of apprehension as not to know the meaning of words; and plainly perceived I was in favour with the gentleman. This made me very uneasy, lest his taste in this particular should clash with my happy situation.

I returned to my chamber, musing on what had passed, and very much resenting the behaviour of Mademoiselle D'Elbieux. I was taken up in contriving means for getting the letter which had not been read to me; the mention made in it of the marquis was alone too great a temptation to be resisted. It was locked up in a drawer, and I often watched an opportunity to lay hold of it.

The Sunday following I completed my design, whilst the lady was at church; for, having overstayed the time, she forgot her keys in the hurry. Opening the drawer I found the letters, which I carried off to my own chamber, and read them very hastily.

The first was that from Mademoiselle D'Elbieux: as much concerned as I was in it, I ran it over very slightly; that of the countess was of greater consequence,

I read

I read it several times. She spoke of me in very favourable terms, excepting where she mentioned her suspicion of an understanding between the marquis and me. She said her son had wounded him dangerously with a pistol bullet; that several reports had been spread in the country concerning the affair; but that she had unravelled the whole, by the means of an old servant, whom she had intrusted with the care of my education; that notwithstanding the marquis was very reserved, as to the grounds of the quarrel, yet his perplexity at not knowing what was become of me, plainly discovered the violence of his passion; that she had thought herself under an indispensable obligation of cautioning the marquis's father, her particular friend, to provide, in case his son should recover, against the consequence of such an amour; an affair of the greater concern, as she thought me virtuous, and my lover a man of honour.

The letter concluded with advising my being sent back to my parents; that my charms might in time occasion much mischief; and that, if she thought of keeping me with her, it would be absolutely necessary to prevent my ever seeing the marquis.

I bewailed the condition of that dear man, and yet did not disapprove of the cautions given on this occasion; I even resolved to turn them to my own advantage. What I had read convinced me of the little stress that was to be laid on so unequal an engagement. I folded up the letters, and carried them back in a great hurry: one moment later, I had been caught in the fact, the receiver coming in just as I was leaving his lady's apartment.

'O! you are here, are you?' says he. 'Well, pretty Jenny, is there any thing troubles you now?' The colour my apprehension occasioned, the consternation I was in, all together set me off to an advantage. That air of assurance most women are fond of, is far from being always a charm; and I have since heard the men acknowledge, that however fond they may be of the sex, they are more taken with a modest and reserved carriage than that forward free behaviour.

Monsieur De G—— was just then an instance of this remark, by extolling me, at least in appearance, beyond such as I have just now mentioned. 'But,' says

he, 'you make me no answer. Do you stand in any awe of me? If you do, it is wrong judged. I am more your friend than you imagine; for it is owing to me that my wife, without knowing my inclinations, shews you so great a regard.' Indeed, soon after I came thither, I had a sattin gown given me: the lady's women were very fond of me; they taught me how to behave, and their instructions were not lost, as girls are ready enough in learning such lessons. 'I had my reasons,' continued Monsieur De G——, 'or I should have ordered your cloaths myself, which would have been after a much genteeler mode; but we must have a regard to the circumstance of time, which you may make more suitable whensoever you please. When say you, Jenny? Shall I reckon you in the number of my friends?'—'I could not wish for any thing better, Sir,' I replied at last, without knowing the extent of that word. 'Aye, now you speak!' continued he. 'You are love itself; upon this condition you shall be as happy as a queen. Adieu; I am apprehensive my wife is coming in, and would not for the world she should surprize us together: as she is extremely apt to be jealous, this would be sufficient to make her run mad. Be upon your guard, and take care not to drop the least hint of this to any one.' I stood like a statue, after hearing such a discourse: Madame De G——, who just then came, found me in that condition. 'What was you doing here?' says she. 'My husband went from hence but now; what has he been saying to you?' 'Methinks you are thoughtful: there is something more than ordinary in it. Come, tell me what has passed: my husband is amorous; I will lay a wager he is in love with you, and has been telling you as much.'—'With me, Madam!' replied I. 'Don't tell me any lyes,' continued she, throwing herself into an easy chair; 'I am not angry with you; but if you conceal any thing, we shall be no longer friends.'—'I can easily satisfy you, Madam,' I replied. 'It is true, Monsieur De G—— has said some obliging things to me; but I imagined it was only in consequence of the favours for which I am beholden to you.'—'Mighty well!' cried the lady, interrupting

rupting me: 'that is to say, he will love you for my sake. But let me hear what he said.'

Upon this, I repeated word for word his whole discourse: only I stopped short where he proposed being my friend; upon second thoughts I had guessed how much it imported. The more I hesitated, the more her curiosity was raised. 'Well, and what answer did you make?' said she very seriously. I repeated my words. 'And what did he say to that?' continued she. 'Ah, Madam! what very much surprized me,' answered I, 'and convinced me I did not rightly understand the expression he had used.' I then related the rest of his discourse, and she mused upon it a little.

'Your tender years plead a pardon for your answer,' said she; 'but do you know to what you have obliged yourself? By virtue of what you said, my husband will secure your person; you are his; and in that case honour, reputation, and all is gone.'—'God forbid!' cried I, interrupting her, and alarmed at what I heard; 'my heart would break, to think I had given the least occasion to any such thing.'—'I believe it,' replied the lady; 'and you have done very well in giving me this detail; otherwise you might have been fatally engaged, without suspecting any ill, till it had been too late to prevent it. Therefore look to it, Jenny, and for the future do nothing without consulting me. The dangers you have already escaped, ought to make you more circumspect than another.'

The lady's discourse had too great an appearance of truth, not to make a deep impression. I was soon convinced she was not mistaken in what she had said; and I had great reason to think myself happy under the direction of so skilful a guide.

Two days after this, one of the lady's women, for whom I had a particular esteem, came to my chamber: 'What! in bed still, lazy one?' said she. 'Come, rise and dress yourself; I am going out, and you must go with me.'—'With all my heart,' answered I, getting up; 'if you had given me the least notice over night, I should have been ready before this.'—'There is no harm done,' answered she; 'it is

not late: however, get ready as fast as you can.'

This servant could not be less than sixty years, forty of which she had passed in the family, where she was very much respected: I made my court to her from the beginning, for I soon perceived she was the governante of the house, and that nothing was transacted but what had her approbation. I had the greater reason to be fond of her, having one day overheard her speak much in my behalf to her lady, prevailing upon her to keep me, when she had thoughts of sending me away. I never let her know, that I was sensible what obligations I had to her, but strove by every thing in my power to make a suitable return.

We went in a hackney-coach to a silk-mercant's in St. Honore's street. She consulted me upon some flowered damask; I gave my opinion of what I liked, and she fixed upon the piece I had fancied. She called for some gowns fit for autumn and spring; still I was consulted, and spoke my mind with the same frankness as before.

She bought three gowns, besides a bed-gown. From thence we drove to a sempstress, where she bought a dozen fine laced shifts, and a dozen plain ones, with other linen suitable.

From thence we went to the Palais; here she bought head-clothes, tippets, ribbands, and other like attire.

We went back to two or three other different shops, for stockings, gloves, &c. at last we alighted at St. Ruch's Bank, and were conducted to an apartment, not very large indeed, but nobly furnished.

The old servant I mentioned, brought table-linen; a footman, who by the livery I knew belonged to the receiver, came in; he laid the cloth very neatly, and then retired.

I stared, not being able to comprehend what all this meant: far from suspecting any thing, I was with a person of some consideration, one that I looked upon as a second mistress; my want of mistrust on this occasion was not at all blameable.

About half an hour afterwards, somebody knocked at the door. The footman brought up a young woman with hoop-petticoats. My directress having chose one of the handsomest; 'Come,' says

says she, 'let us see how this will fit you.' I put off my gown, it was tried on, and I thought it no small addition towards a graceful appearance; a secret complacency arose when I viewed myself in the glass, and saw I was not at all despicable.

My vanity was discovered by my directress. 'You are not mistaken, pretty Jenny, in thinking yourself handsome,' says she; 'you are very lovely; I must have the pleasure of dressing your head according to my fancy.' As I was not against it, she fell to curling my hair, and then put me on one of the bought heads; only to try it, she said. I made great difficulty when we came to the red. 'You are a simpleton,' cried she; 'don't you see it is only for diversion? We have nothing to do now but only to adorn these little ears: and for that, too, we have the good luck to be provided.' Upon this she pulled out her purse, which seemed to be none of the lightest, from whence she took a paper containing a pair of brilliant ear-rings. 'What do you think of them?'—'Exceeding fine,' answered I. 'Well, then, let us see if they become you as well as the rest.' I viewed myself; the alteration was so great, that through surprise I was not able to speak. And, indeed, Jenny was no more; a well-made young lady, killingly handsome, had taken her place; the red gave new lustre to my eyes; and, to speak the truth, I thought myself transcendently charming.

Let me be indulged in this folly of vanity; especially as I am a woman. When Monsieur De La Valle, the fortunate peasant, placed his personal merit in so strong a light, I who am speaking was not disgusted at it: I ask but the same favour at the hands of the publick.

Whilst I was thus taken up with the contemplation of my own dear self, a mantua-maker came in. 'Come, Miss,' said my directress, 'put off your gown, that your measure may be taken: your cloaths will be made to admiration. Mrs. Pagode has the best hand in France for setting off an handsome woman.' Thus far I had not the least suspicion: but the taking my measure, and these expressions, opened my eyes; at once I saw clearly into the whole affair. 'O heavens!' said I to

myself, 'I am betrayed!' I had not strength to reason any farther.

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perceiving of it, applauded my own charms: the stuffs were rich, I tried their effect upon me. 'Were I in such cloaths,' said I to myself, 'and seen by the marquis, I might not for the future, perhaps, be so long without hearing from him. But where is the harm,' continued I, 'in accepting of these fine things? I am not obliged to make any return. Monsieur De G—— has given me his word—'

I was going on in this train of thought, when the waiting-woman came in: she was too sly not to discover the bent of my soul in those moments. 'How, now, pretty Jenny!' says she; 'you have let my master go away. He seemed much disturbed: sure you would not say any thing disagreeable to him.'—'No, God forbid!' answered I; 'at first, indeed, methought, he seemed to drive at something out of the way.'—'He!' cried the waiting-woman, taking me up with an insinuating air; 'alack! you know little of him: a very moderate compliance will purchase presents without end from him. Go, go, he deserves you should be a little more complaisant; few women in Paris would scruple to——' 'Very fine! very fine, indeed!' cried out Madam De G——, who had been listening at the door, and that moment entered the room; 'a pious exhortation, truly, this same of yours to a young girl! Wicked wretch! I am glad I know thee. Heavens! who would have thought it, that I should be so long imposed upon by her hypocrisy! Be gone, vile dissembler; be gone this instant! see my face no more; for depend upon it, if you do not leave Paris before this time to-morrow, I will confine you for life.—Good God!' continued the lady, throwing herself, quite fatigued as it were, into an easy chair, 'that ever I should employ such a creature!' But the wretch did not stay to hear all this out, the first apostrophe being sufficient to pack her off: for my part, I was as much at a loss, as if I had been the criminal myself.

The lady seemed to be in a profound meditation; but presently recovering herself, and looking on me with all the goodness imaginable, 'Your discretion and prudence I shall never forget,' said she; 'the note you sent, was brought me by a person whose conduct had a great appearance of virtue. Lay aside

'your tears in regard of my husband; your modest behaviour will increase his esteem, and he will be the first man to encourage you for having done your duty. I know him too well, to doubt of what I say. Wretched servant! you are likewise a promoter of these disorders. It is you put my husband on such exploits: it is to such base compliers with their masters inclinations, that we justly attribute so many misunderstandings and divorces.—Very genteel and pretty furniture, in truth!' continued she, looking on the table and the other things provided for me. 'Poor child!' added she, beholding my head-dress and paint; 'seducing allurements, too often fatal to youth!' This detail shamed me very much; I snatched up a napkin, and immediately demolished my patches and paint. 'Embrace me, my dear Jenny,' said the good lady, 'I am charmed with your virtuous indignation! Now you are fit to appear. Call some of my servants, and order up the master or mistress of the house. I would fain know who it belongs to, and in whose name these lodgings have been taken.'

The mistress came herself. One of those who always fawn upon her company, and pique themselves on being the very pink of courtesy; our landlady was so to such a degree, that it was impossible to discourse with her on any other strain. 'Lord, Madam, do me the honour to believe—' Every word was so smoothed with compliments, that I am apt to think, when she abused any one, it was *under favour*; *with submission*; &c. Her eyes languished so much whilst she spoke, that they were often in a manner closed up; at every word she was sure to moisten her lips, and each phrase was distinguished by a small spitting, being introduced by an affected *hem*, and ended in a most agreeable squeak.

This whining gentlewoman informed us, that Monsieur De G—— hired the lodgings, and furnished them; that she did not know my name, but the gentleman had assured her I was a married woman, and came to Paris in order to sue for a separate maintenance, my husband squandering away his effects in continual debaucheries; that he had received great recommendations in my behalf, being related to the best families in Bretaign.

• The story is well enough contrived,' replied the lady; 'but I can assure you the gentleman has imposed upon you; it is all a fiction. Adieu!' continued she; 'another time be more circumspect who you take into your house. A very little reflection would have convinced you, that if this lady was so well recommended to Monsieur De G——, he being a married man, the stranger might have had an apartment in his house; and you are the more inexcusable in this affair, as you own we are no strangers to you.' Saying this, she locked up every thing; we got into the coach, and returned home.

Monsieur De G—— had been gone but a few minutes; he was acquainted with what had happened by a note which, as we found afterwards, the waiting-woman had sent: we were told he was gone into the country.

Although this gentleman had been engaged in several intrigues, he was always so circumspect, and the regard he had for his lady so particular, that he would not for the world give her the least uneasiness, or suffer any thing of this kind to become publick. He was no sooner arrived at his seat, but he wrote to beg pardon for what was past, assuring her, she should have no reason to complain of his future conduct; and as a proof of his sincerity, he was willing I should be sent home. The lady, whose goodness to me increased continually, read me his letter, and her answer to it. She told him, he was to blame in absenting himself on such a trifling occasion; that no one can always command their inclinations, and if his were never more out of the way, it would be very well; that she herself had a particular value for me, as I justly deserved; that she had no thoughts of sending me away, being very secure in my discretion. The letter concluded with repeated assurances of the tenderest affection.

Did every wife behave in this manner, as often as the nuptial state lies under a cloud, divorces would not be so much in vogue in these our days.

I passed almost a year without hearing any thing of the marquis. Time and reflection had allayed that ardent passion so visible in the beginning of these Memoirs. Madame De G—— was so fond of me, as to make no distinction between her daughter and me; under

the masters who attended her, I had made some proficiency, and I sung with so much judgment as to gain the applause of all who visited the lady. Mademoiselle, her daughter, far from resembling Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, loved me very tenderly, and was never easy in my absence. Monsieur De G——'s love-fit was become a paternal affection, of which he soon gave me very convincing proofs; but however commendable his intentions might be, I could look upon nothing which came from that quarter with a very favourable eye.

Several of the company who resorted to the house made their addresses to me; but the most importunate suitor was a certain Monsieur Gripart, farmer-general of the taxes, immensely rich, and frightfully deformed. People may pretend that a young woman ought to be directed in her choice by reason, and not by fancy; but, for my part, to deal ingenuously, I could not think Monsieur Gripart any other than insupportably disagreeable. Nevertheless some regard was due to him, as he was really in earnest. Madame De G—— assured me of it, and added, she should think herself very happy if she could make it a match. I did not dare to enter on the subject of my dislike to him; but was in hopes that my mean birth, and the disadvantages attending it, would prove a sufficient obstacle, without my appearing in the affair: but the misfortune was, Monsieur Gripart, who came from nothing himself, looked upon great extraction no more than a lucky hit, and consequently did not feed upon such illustrious chimeras. Considering the great share he had in some of my adventures, it will not be amiss to draw his picture.

He was of a middle stature; one half of his body, as well as his face, very different from the other. It is true, he was not hunch-backed, but was equally graceful; for when he stood as straight as he could, one would imagine he was stooping to take something up. The description of his countenance will be no easy task: I never saw any thing like it. His head was an oval inverted, the top of the forehead making the point; his eyes inclined to each other in proportion as the figure diminished, and consequently their lower parts were as much at a distance; his mouth was made

archwise, but instead of being turned downwards, which is usual enough, the upper-lip and his nostrils seemed to be but one piece; and when he laughed, it was impossible to distinguish the one from the other: but both his lips, contrary to what we generally see, turned inwards; and his nose, proud of its pre-eminence, was puffed up very fiercely on all occasions.

His eyes were as big as those of an ox, without any advantage in point of sight; their lids were so fond of each other, that they never parted without tears.

The left eye-brow was at a considerable distance from the eye to which it belonged, and took in at least one half of the forehead, being turned upon itself; whereas the other could scarce be distinguished from the right-eye.

The height of his forehead must have been excessive, had not the border of eye-brows, we just now mentioned, formed an agreeable point of view. The bushy periwig, which Monsieur Gripart usually wore, looked like a suitable frame to so frightful a picture.

This gallant, just such as I describe him, loved me to distraction: not a day passed but he made me a visit; which liberty, and that of discoursing with me at pleasure, he had taken up of his own accord. Whilst I was ignorant of his designs, the droll figure and humorous conversation of the man was an amusement. It was a considerable time before he made any declaration, and till then I could not believe a man of his mould capable of love like other people: nevertheless, personal deformity is no bar to virtue, wit, or love; and instances are not wanting where the most contemptible aspect has deserved a character infinitely preferable to the merits of those whose personal qualifications have been altogether charming.

At last he declared himself, taking an opportunity whilst Madame De G—— was writing. He came up to me, as I was at work, with some disorder in his countenance: 'Lay by that useless task,' said he; 'will you never be tired with embroidering?'—'Why so?' answered I. 'Ah, ah!' continued he, 'I have something to say to you of, that consequence, as to deserve all the attention you are mistress of.'

'Do you know, that for these eight month, six days, and four hours, I

'have been in love with you? You laugh, but this is not a trifle to be jested with. The deuce! a Gripart in love? why there never was such a thing known in the family before; the whole race of us, from father to son, always married without any such thing as love in the case: I am the first that ever forfeited so noble a prerogative. Till now I never looked at a woman but through the wrong end of the perspective; the miracle was reserved for you. That ever I should be in love! To speak the truth, I could not have believed it myself, had I not been convinced of it by my sleeping so sound ever since I came acquainted with you; before that, I had not time to eat or sleep, being so taken up with getting money; at present I eat, sleep, and now and then spend a penny: wonderful effects of my passion, enough to move a rock! What, are you insensible? Well, to convince you at once, I will tell you more. You cannot but know that interest is all in all; judge, then, how much you engross all my thoughts, by what I am going to relate. The other day a person brought me a sum of money; it was no sooner counted out but I locked it up in my strong box; the man who paid the money waited for an acquittance, No, I thank you; my thoughts were so busy about you, I quite forgot that piece of form, as well as that I had received the money. At last my debtor, whom I was sending away without any acknowledgment, told me, he supposed I was too busy to give him an acquittance. "What acquittance?" replied I. "Why, a receipt," continued he. "A receipt!" cried I; "for what?"—"You are disposed to be merry, Sir," says he, "I perceive; it is for the money—" "Oh! right," said I, "whenever you pay me the nine thousand five hundred livres, you shall have the discharge: at present I have business, and you must leave me." Saying this, I put him by the shoulders out of my closet. The poor fellow, astonished to see me in earnest, and believing I intended to cheat him of his money, bellowed like a sucking calf. This odd behaviour awaked me out of my dream; and after laughing very heartily at my absence of mind, I gave him a receipt in form; and,

and, that he might remember as long as he lived, that Gripart was in love, I generously bestowed upon him a whole shilling. The man was so surprized, that he never staid to thank me; I warrant you, he thought himself as happy as prince.

'No doubt on't,' replied I, 'with so considerable a sum!'—'Yes, indeed, considerable,' added he; 'with twelve pence much may be done. Some of these days I will give you the history of my life; why, with such a sum I made my fortune. But, let us return to my love-affair; deuce take me, that is more to the purpose!'

Monsieur Gripart embellished his declaration with all the oratory peculiar to a financier, much of which I cannot call to mind: what I remember is, that he compared me to a large sum, the employing of which was to be his property; and he concluded with saying, he foresaw the price would be enhanced upon him, through the number of bidders; but that he was resolved to carry his point at the sale, and not be such a Tony, as to let the candle burn out before he bid his last price.

In the mean time, I learned that this extraordinary lover's designs were carrying on with great earnestness. A waiting-woman of Madame De G——, named Christina, my bosom-friend, overheard some discourse, of which I was the subject. Monsieur De G—— argued very strongly in favour of the match, and his lady was entirely bent upon it.

I was no sooner apprized that the affair was concluded upon, but I gave myself up to a frightful disquiet. I called to mind the beginning of that passion, once so dear to me; I ran over all that ever the marquis had said and vowed to me. 'Heavens!' cried I to myself, 'is it possible that he should forget all; and, in so long a time, never once to let me hear from him? And yet how much did I confide in it! Fatal credulity! False, deceitful man!' A torrent of tears succeeded; certainly none were ever shed with greater sincerity.

One morning, when I was overwhelmed with reflections of this nature, Christina came dancing and jumping into my room. 'What will you give me for my good news?' I had wiped my eyes, hearing her come; but the marks

of my trouble were too fresh to be undiscovered at first sight. 'What ails you?' said she very compassionately; 'you have been crying; there is something troubles you, which is kept secret from me. You are very cross, but I will come even with you, and will know the bottom of it very shortly. At present, let me tell you, your mother is in the house, and is just now coming up stairs.'

This piece of news, so very unexpected, surprized me much, and gave me great joy. To see a mother after so long an absence, what an endearing comfort! I slipped on a gown, and ran to throw myself into her arms. I met her, folded my arms about her neck; she embraced me with great affection. What a happiness! My sister accompanied her. By turns I gave them the most ardent marks of the transport I felt, and then conducted them to my chamber. Our discourse, at first, through eagerness, was too confused to be understood. By degrees I became acquainted with our family-affairs. My father was in good health, and on his way hither; Colin had married my sister out of mere spite: I was not a little pleased at this news for my sister's sake; the young fellow had very good dispositions, and wherewithal to make her very easy in her circumstances.

The steward, who always shewed me much respect, hearing my parents were come, sent a breakfast to my chamber; I exerted myself in doing the honours of the house, finding an infinite satisfaction in it. My sister stared at me with astonishment. 'Look, mamma,' said she, 'she is no longer our Jenny; this is a fine lady. How she is dressed! what linen!' I had on a bed-gown, nothing extraordinary; yet was much pleased with my being taken notice of. Vanity is always at hand, and for those who have left their home, there cannot be a greater pleasure than to be seen again by their friends genteely dressed; but I intended to surprize them far more in my best cloaths.

'Do you know, Jenny,' said my mother after breakfast, 'what has brought me hither? To see you married.' That word made me turn pale. 'To whom?' not to Colin; there I was safe; I could think of nobody but Monsieur Gripart. My mother saw the trouble I was in. 'Is it joy or grief that

‘that moves you thus?’ said she. ‘You cannot, sure, have so far forgot the education I gave you, as to let your heart upon any one?’—‘No, dear mother,’ answered I, in great confusion; ‘only I did not expect any such tidings.’

‘Well, then, I am the bearer of them,’ continued she, looking pleasantly again; ‘I must tell you, that you are extremely happy, after all that has passed, to have fallen into this lady’s hands! She has left nothing unsaid to your godmother in your praise; but her last letter has crowned the work. The countess sent immediately for me, and ordered me hither in all haste, telling me, that Madame De G—— had provided a husband for you, who would heap wealth and honour upon the family. This is all I know of the matter.’

Just as my mother had done speaking, a footman came to let her know that Madame De G—— must speak with her. She went immediately, leaving my sister with me.

Her sentiments in regard to me were entirely altered: her joy at seeing me again, and the sincere caresses she bestowed upon me, banished all resentment of her former behaviour. Where there is a fund of good-nature, injuries are easily forgot.

I was not yet sufficiently acquainted with her to make her my confidante. Nevertheless, as I had a strong inclination to know what had passed in my absence, I ventured to ask how the family did at the castle. ‘The countess,’ answered she, ‘is much the same; she comes very shortly to Paris with her daughter, who has been courted for some time by Monsieur De F——. As to the chevalier, nobody knows what is become of him; he is rarely seen, ever since that affair: it has made much noise, and is variously related.’

‘Good God!’ continued she, ‘how pleased was I, to hear you was so well placed! You acted in the discreetest manner possible, not to return with Colin. Lord! how you would have been pointed at in the village! To this hour, scarce four words are spoke, in which your name is not mentioned.’

‘Dear sister,’ cried I, ‘tell me on what grounds I am thus censured, and

‘then I will satisfy you how far they are just.’—‘You cannot be ignorant,’ replied she, ‘what one must expect in all such little places; every trifle is magnified into an affair of consequence: neighbours are always upon the watch, as to what passes in the next house, so that nothing escapes unobserved; and if the true motive is not discovered, a much worse is invented. The report is, that the marquis, Mademoiselle De Parc, and you, had laid a design for your being carried off. They add, that Monsieur Le Chevalier being likewise in love with you, guided by jealousy, discovered the plot. You are blamed for being the occasion of the duel your two admirers fought, by giving them both encouragement at the same time. All which was the more readily believed, because Mademoiselle D’Elbieux was heard to say, that your coquetry with the men was to her insupportable.’

‘However, these surmises, through my mother’s usual discretion, began to lose ground: the inquisitive were put on the wrong scent, by her giving out you was gone to one of her aunts. This found credit: but Colin, coming home frightened out of his wits, and soundly thrashed, spoiled all again, by the account he gave of his meeting with you; he told every one how much he had endeavoured to bring you home, without being able to prevail; that your head was certainly turned, by listening to the nonsensical discourse of the fine gentlemen; that nevertheless he had compassed his design, if the marquis’s cursed valet de chambre had not interposed; that the fellow must certainly deal with the devil, because, notwithstanding Colin’s gun, and his companion Christopher’s cudgel, they were both handled very roughly.’

‘He was so enraged, in fine, that he talked more against you than any one, and said he did not doubt but the marquis had you in some house in the neighbourhood.’

‘The same day that Colin came with this story, the chevalier arrived. When he was informed of what had passed, he called for Colin, and was shut up with him a considerable time. We saw him go away foaming like a madman;

man; swearing he would take up Colin's quarrel, and teach Dubois to abuse his tenants.

'As for the marquis, he sent constantly twice a week during your absence, to know if you had been found. As soon as he was able to go abroad, the chevalier disappeared; which gave room to a great deal of talk. For some time it has not been known what is become of him.

'Notwithstanding those reports, you are still beloved by every one, except Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, who lets slip no opportunity of falling upon you. As soon as she heard where you were, she told several they must expect to hear very shortly of some new adventure; that you are a sly baggage, and are not at Paris for nothing, as she has good reason to suspect.'

'Good God!' cried I, 'what have I done to deserve her hatred in this manner?'—'We know well enough,' continued my sister: 'she is secretly in love with the marquis, and he is as indifferent on his side, having no great opinion of her beauty. She has discovered that it is owing to you——' 'To me! she is much in the wrong!' replied I, overjoyed to put my sister on the subject: 'I never could perceive there was any grounds to think the marquis so fond of me as people imagine. From the time I left the castle, I have not so much as heard him mentioned.'—'Had he been so indifferent,' replied my sister, very slyly, 'he would scarce have sent so often to enquire after you. But he lost his labour; for the countess expressly charged us not to give him any account of you. Whether he was acquainted with this order of her's I cannot say; but we have never heard any more of him since. It was said, indeed, at the castle, that he retired into another country; I don't know the name of it; that his father had endeavoured by all possible means to bring him to court again, but without success; and that his physicians, by his own directions, had advised the country air, that he might avoid any farther improprieties on that subject.'

This account revived all my tender sentiments for the marquis: a deep sigh forced it's way, 'Ah, Jenny! I plainly see you are in love with the mar-

quis,' said my sister. 'I cannot blame you; his merit deserves no less; but have a care how you indulge your passion; the settlement now proposed will be in danger of miscarrying. Look to it; you cannot but see the inequality between the marquis and yourself; on the other hand, you are on the point of being married very advantageously, unless your indiscretion in favour of the marquis overturns the whole affair.'—'I thank you,' replied I, 'for this good advice, dictated by a friendly heart; I shall endeavour to put it in practice, and make a sacrifice of myself.' This was followed by a torrent of tears, which moved my sister very much. 'Here,' says she, 'I cannot bear to see you in trouble; I deferred telling you I had a letter, which, notwithstanding the strict injunctions to the contrary, I shall venture to give you. Make yourself easy, then; Mademoiselle De Parc put it into my hands the night before we came from home: she is still fond of you; and, if I am not much mistaken, has sent very acceptable tidings. Dubois often sees her, as I have discovered, though it is very privately. You will pardon my reservedness, Jenny, when you reflect on these reasons, and the hazard I am exposed to in the affair.'

I opened the letter with great precipitation: the address was in a woman's hand; but, agreeable surprize! within I discovered the marquis's writing. I blushed and trembled while I read as follows.

WHERE are you, my charming Jenny? Will this mark of my tender love and fidelity ever come to your hands? Heavens! what anguish and torture do I not suffer from the cruel uncertainty of your situation! Death itself cannot be compared with it! What has befallen you? Where are you? I would have gone to the farthest corner of the earth, on the least prospect of finding you; but something tells me, I am not far from you. Still I live in hopes of a favourable hour: it must not be long in coming; my patience is at an end! I conjure you by all that is dear, if this comes safe, to let me hear from you. Nothing else can possibly
I have

* save a life long since devoted to you
* alone.

‘THE MARQUIS OF L. V.

‘April —, Castle of L. V.’

I had scarce time to read the letter, when my sister, who stood upon the watch, came running to tell me she heard somebody on the stairs; I put up the letter very hastily, and being sent for by the lady, I went with a heavy heart, foreboding the ill news I expected to hear.

‘I am overjoyed, Jenny,’ said the lady as soon as she saw me, ‘that I have it in my power to make you amends for what, through a principle of virtue, you heretofore declined. The proof you then gave me of your discretion is not forgot; and from that time, Monsieur De G—— and I were determined on making your fortune. A match is agreed on for you, the articles are drawn, and I sent for your parents to rejoice with you on this occasion. Monsieur Gripart is the person designed for you: his riches are very considerable, and are like to increase; he is much in love with you, and will make you happy; he has already settled twenty thousand crowns upon you. Is not this a convincing proof, that Heaven, sooner or later, rewards those who walk in the narrow paths of virtue?’

‘You make me no answer, Jenny! That blush becomes you, and is a mark of your modesty. — ‘Very true,’ replied my mother; ‘but that ought not to hinder her from throwing herself at your feet, Madam, and thanking you with the most profound acknowledgments for all your favours.’ I did so immediately, kissing her hand. ‘Rise, my dear,’ said she, taking me in her arms; ‘I look upon you as my own, and will be at the expence of the wedding, which shall be at our country-seat. My husband is there already; his present consists of some things you have seen before. As for ‘Mignonne,’ meaning her own daughter, ‘to whom you are very dear, as she has not much to give, insists upon your accepting of her pearl necklace.’ My mother, charmed with such marks of affection, was at a loss how to express her gratitude. Just at that instant the lady was informed that company

was coming in. We retired to my chamber, whither we were followed by several of the servants, to congratulate with us upon the good news, I having gained their affections by my affable behaviour.

The day following, my father came: such an alteration in his daughter was a great surprize to him; my sister told me he even cried for joy.

The Tuesday following, to which there were but three days, was appointed for the wedding. It was not possible for me to prevent it. What reason could I alledge against it? A marriage that gratified the ambition and completed the happiness of our family: I heard nothing else talked of; it was only at night I had an opportunity to vent my sighs and bewail my condition.

At last the fatal hour came. On the day before, Monsieur Gripart sent me jewels to the value of twenty thousand livres. The same day we had repaired to the castle of C——; the place appointed for our nuptials. The news was spread in the neighbourhood, and drew a great concourse of people from all parts.

The morning following I was called up at four, to be led, a melancholy victim, to the altar. They did me the honour, it is true, to attribute my uneasiness to the fear and apprehension usual with young women at the approach of marriage. Alas! my thoughts were far otherwise employed.

Two days before this, I had struggled very hard between the suggestions of love and decency. Love prompted me to acquaint the marquis with the intended espousals: I knew how to direct to him; the thing was feasible. ‘If he really loves me in the manner he expresses,’ thought I, ‘and has those honourable designs he seem to hint, it would not be a difficult matter for him to break off this fatal match; or, should his intentions be of a different kind, my new engagement would be attended with less regret.’ On the other hand, decency disclaimed any such conduct, too forward to become a young woman well educated: it was running after a husband. ‘What a disgrace,’ I thought, ‘if I should act thus, and be backward on his part! I should sink under such a load of affliction.’ No sooner did I resolve

one way, but immediately I found myself inclined to the other. Frightful is such a wavering situation; and much I pity those who are so unfortunate as to lie under a perplexity, without being able to come to a determination.

Nevertheless, they led me to church. Mass being over, the usual exhortation was made: the ceremony was already begun; Monsieur Gripart had even pronounced the fatal '*I will*;' when, the priest turning to me for my consent, a voice was heard from the bottom of the church, crying out, 'Hold, hold!'

The curate was at a stand: every one looked back. A young woman made her way through the crowd, and coming up to the altar, desired to speak with the priest in private. He took her into the vestry, together with Madam De G—— and M. Gripart. I remained in my place, astonished, and unable to divine the occasion of such an accident.

In the mean time the people, surprised at what had happened, crowded to the altar. Their eager and curious eyes were fixed on me. Some said the bride was very handsome, and worthy of her good fortune; others said, it was a pity any thing should thwart it; a countryman cried, 'Ne'er moin'd, she'll get a husband for all this.'

At last the vestry door opened: one of the church-wardens came to call me; I was no sooner entered but the door was shut again.

'Your wedding, Jenny, is put off for the present,' said Madame De G——, 'till such time as M. Gripart removes a difficulty made by a woman, to whom, it seems, he formerly promised marriage. She lives in the neighbourhood, and hearing he was on the point of espousing you, has put in her claim by this person. It was something late, indeed, and might have been slighted, but it is better to wait till the parties have compromised the matter.'

'I am extremely afflicted, Miss, at what has happened,' said M. Gripart. 'Youth has it's follies. I had entirely forgot this promise; but this delay will only make surer work of it, as I am certain the person in question will hear reason.'—'No doubt of it,' replied the young woman who had interrupted our nuptials; 'she only insists upon marrying her, or nobody.'

—'That's a little hard,' answered M.

Gripart; 'but this is not a place to argue in; you shall go with me in my coach to her.' He presented her his hand, and making a low bow, retired.

We returned to the castle; my father and mother very much down in the mouth. But my concern was to hide my joy, which seemed, I knew not why, to promise a deliverance from what I so much dreaded.

But this did not last long: M. Gripart returned the next morning very gay; he had removed the obstacle, notwithstanding his avarice, which was forced to give way on this occasion. Money carries all before it. My apprehensions returned; my father and mother were as much elated. The day was once more fixed for the wedding, and nothing remained that could possibly be any hindrance.

The evening before we were to be certainly married, we took the air on a high terrace; it looked upon a meadow, at the end of which, about forty paces distant, was the great road. The company talked on several diverting subjects. M. Gripart addressed me with his tedious courtship. As I was leaning in a melancholy posture on the balustrade of the terrace, amusing myself with the different objects that presented themselves, several horses, followed by a pack of hounds, passed leisurely along the road. This sight reminded me of what had happened in the forest of Fontainebleau, the dear moment that brought me first acquainted with the marquis. My eyes dwelt with pleasure on the prospect. I seemed to divine all that was to befall me.

A single person, dressed in green trimmed with gold, came very gently cross the meadow, in a bye path at the foot of the terrace; the horse, as the reins lay upon his neck, taking the advantage of his rider's profound contemplation, frequently stopped to graze. The gentleman, by his folded arms and head hanging down, seemed to meditate on some important affair.

A situation so exactly resembling my own, made me consider him very attentively. My heart began to beat; in viewing his features as he drew nearer, methought I knew him. Alas! it was the marquis himself; his image was too deeply engraved to be mistaken. As he passed by the balustrade where I stood, he looked up and put off his hat.

This gave me a full view of him; I was no longer myself, but shrieked out, being suddenly taken ill.

Every one ran to my assistance. As I did not faint away, my eyes were never off the dear object that caused my tender emotion. The marquis had stopped, hearing me cry out; and looking very earnestly, 'Good God!' he cried, 'it is she.' Saying this, he clapped spurs to his horse, and was out of sight in a moment.

The company was too busy about me to observe what passed. Monsieur Gripart and my father led me to a room, and laid me upon a couch.

As my surprize was the effect of joy, it was not attended with any ill consequences: I presently recovered, and felt an unusual tranquillity. Madame De G—— had enquired, when the marquis passed by, if any one knew that nobleman; for such he appeared to be by his numerous retinue. My father's common sense convinced him at once he ought to hold his tongue on this occasion; but my mother, either through vanity, or an itch of talking, was not so discreet. 'Yes, indeed, we know him well enough,' she cried; 'it is the Marquis of L. V. who brought our bride the gratification so much talked of.'—'O ho!' replied the lady; 'if that be the case, our wedding is like to meet with another rub: I thought our damsel did not change colour for nothing.'—'Colour me no colours!' cried my father in a pet; 'the marriage shall go on: I'll be bound, Madam, for the performance. If it miscarries, the fault shall not be on her side. The marquis is no husband for her.'—'I am mightily pleased,' replied Madame De G——, 'with what you say; but I am at a loss how to behave in case he comes here: however, it is very well Monsieur Gripart did not perceive what happened. Let every one be upon their guard, and not take any notice of it when he is present.' I heard all this from the next room.

It was not long before the lady was informed that a gentleman desired to speak with her. I easily guessed who, and from thence was much disturbed. My father and mother immediately observed my looks, which were presently fixed on the ground. Monsieur Gripart coming in at the delivery of the message, cried out, 'He is welcome,

and must honour us with his company at supper.'

After a quarter of an hour's private discourse with the marquis, Madame De G—— sent for me. I entered the room in a sort of agony. 'Come hither, my dear child,' said she; 'employ the sway you have over this nobleman, to assert your own right and the fortune offered to you. He opposes your marriage, and protests he will leave no thing undone that may prevent it.' The marquis was on his knees before Madame De G——; but leaving her, he addressed himself to me in the same posture. 'Ah, Jenny! have I deserved,' says he, 'to be the most forlorn of mankind?'

How powerful is a lover in such a submissive posture! I asked him, with tears in my eyes, 'What can you expect I should do? I, that am not my own mistress! In the name of goodness, leave me,' I said; 'be gone; don't overwhelm a virtuous disposition, too much shaken by your presence.'—'Must I go?' replied he. 'Ah, Miss, is this the reception you afford a person who adores you, and that, too, after so long an absence? One, who lives but for you, from the first moment he saw your face? Does your good fortune dazzle you, ungenerous as you are, and prevail upon you thus to sacrifice me? I have wrote twenty letters to you; and what answers have I received! what a one was it you sent me but yesterday! that I should trouble you no more; that you never loved me; and, as a proof of it, would accept of the first match that was proposed; that I should never know your abode, till you was secure in the arms of a husband—' 'Ah! hold, Sir,' I cried; 'I don't deserve any such reproach: I never wrote to you.'—'You never wrote to me! Cruel creature! I am not to be believed, then, without a proof of what I say! Heavens, this is a new insult! Can you think me capable of being an impostor? But I must prove my words; this letter,' continued he, pulling one out, 'will justify me. Is this the essay you make, after learning to write?' Looking upon the paper, what should I discover but Mademoiselle D'Elbieux's hand! Madame De G—— came to look upon it, and knowing her writing, assured him of the truth.

truth. 'Ah, Madam!' said he, 'you restore me to life! Charming Jenny, compleat what this lady has begun, by promising me not to marry your new admirer.'—'As if that,' cried I, interrupting him, 'depended on me! Is it not to you I owe all my affliction? Am I to withstand a father and a mother? Must I frustrate the good intentions of this lady? Heaven knows, how little either affection or interest influences me in going to the altar.'—'Then you will go?' replied the marquis in a melancholy voice. 'You are willing to compleat your nuptials and end my life in the same instant?'—'God forbid!' cried I, redoubling my tears; 'it is too dear, Heaven is my witness. Alas! I love you but too well to enjoy any peace of mind; nevertheless, how can I decline this match? What reasons would you have me give for disobeying my parents?'—'Your love for me, my charmer!' answered the marquis. 'Ah! were such a declaration sufficient,' replied I, 'with how much pleasure could I make it!'—'It is enough, it is enough, my charming Jenny,' cried the marquis.—'Pardon, Madam, my transports; your countenance tells me my situation moves you to compassion. I have already acquainted you with the purity of my intentions; do you believe me? Will you perform your promise? Speak; you see this lovely creature does not disown her passion. Answer me?' cried he, throwing himself again at her feet. 'Heavens! she hesitates: what am I to expect? Will nothing less than the last drop of my blood prevail upon you?'—

'How much you perplex me, my lord!' answered Madame De G— after some pause. 'By what means can an affair, so far advanced, be broke off? It is true, Monsieur Gripart is your inferior in point of birth, nevertheless he is a person of some distinction in the world. He is our friend; what colour, then, can we give to our refusal? On the other side, Jenny is truly dear to me. A thousand things occur at once. Your honour nothing can surpass, I believe; your word, inviolable, without doubt; nevertheless, you must own, my lord marquis, that your father can never be brought to approve of so unequal a match; he has already explained him-

self on that subject, and would never forgive me, did he suspect me capable of giving the least encouragement in an affair of this nature. The most I can possibly do, is to fulfil the promise my compassion extorted in your behalf: I will find means of deferring this wedding eight days longer, during which time do your endeavour to break it off, without drawing any suspicion on Jenny.' Saying this, she left the room; I was about to follow, but the marquis stopped me.

'Stay one moment,' said he with a sorrowful distracted air, 'unless you will see me dead at your feet. Can you abandon me thus to despair?'—'Good God!' replied I, terrified at seeing him in this condition, 'what can I do? What answer would you have me make to the reasons you just now heard alledged?'—'That you slight them all for my sake,' said he, 'and declare against this detested match.'—'How!' continued I, 'would you bring my character in question with persons to whom I am so much obliged?'—'Far from it,' cried he, 'your reputation is dearer to me than life itself; I would not, for the world, be the occasion of your ruin. I am ready to marry you myself; receive my plighted troth, my solemn vows; I call Heaven to witness I will marry none but you. This has all along been my design, and I only waited a favourable opportunity to convince you of it. I have a father, it is true; but if you will consent to make me so happy, we may easily be married without his knowing of it. He is advanced in years, and cannot live long; though God forbid I should desire his death! I would sooner die myself. I am even unwilling to give him the least uneasiness; and for that reason propose being married privately. If you love me—' 'I do love you,' cried I, 'alas! beyond what can be expressed. But, my lord, I will never consent to such a marriage to gain the world. I love you, again I repeat it. Do you ask a proof? I will disobey my parents, if it is necessary: yes,' continued I, redoubling my tears, 'I will set every one against me, but that is all you must expect.'—'What!' cried the marquis, with great emotion, 'will you refuse me? Do you suspect my protestations? Can

‘you think me so perfidious a villain?’
 —‘No, no,’ replied I, interrupting him,
 ‘I have an entire confidence in you,
 and am fully convinced what honourable sentiments you are pleased
 to entertain in my regard, and by
 conquering the weaknesses my passion
 inspires me with, will in some
 measure deserve them. My honour
 is all I possess; in the name of goodness,
 do not seek it’s ruin, nor tarnish
 it by such proposals.’ I had no sooner
 said this, but I ran away as fast as possible.
 Madame De G——, who had overheard us,
 stopped me. ‘Come in to this room,’ says she;
 ‘I have something of the greatest consequence to
 impart to you.’ She locked the door upon us;
 and making me sit down, spoke in the following manner.

‘I shall never forget the proofs you
 have, in my hearing, just now given
 of your discretion,’ continued Madame De G——:
 ‘when we have more leisure, I shall express my satisfaction;
 in the mean time, let me exhort you never to swerve from so fair
 a path. Whilst my ear, attentive to
 your tender conversation, enjoyed the
 pleasure of a scene, wherein virtue
 triumphed over love, my eyes fixed
 on the park, were struck with the
 sight of several people in motion;
 astonished to see strangers passing
 backwards and forward, I placed myself
 at the window, so as not to be seen;
 judge of my surprize, when I observed
 among five or six horsemen, a livery
 belonging to one, whose name will make you tremble.
 A park-keeper led the way, and opened
 them a door into the greenhouse. After this
 he discoursed awhile with a person in laced
 cloaths; I tremble to think it must be the
 Chevalier D’Elbieux: that wretch has
 certainly got intelligence where you are,
 and, hurried on by his brutal appetites,
 has some wicked design.’ — ‘Ah, Madam!’
 cried I, trembling, ‘I am ruined unless you
 stand my friend! Your conjectures are
 but too well grounded: what you say,
 reminds me of something that gave me no
 small uneasiness; it was with difficulty I put
 it out of my head. Only last night, Madam,’
 continued I, ‘as well as fear would let me,
 I heard a noise at my door; I waked your
 chambermaid, but was obliged to speak pretty
 loud first. Upon this a voice, which

‘I am sure I have heard before, said, “We must retire.” I was terrified,
 and crept close to Isâbel; but she only
 laughed at my apprehension, saying, it
 was only some of the servants who
 had been at the alehouse whilst the
 family was in bed, and hearing me
 speak, were afraid of being discovered.
 But for all she could say, I remained
 very much frightened, still fancying I
 heard the same noise.’ — ‘I easily imagine,’
 replied Madame De G——, who heard me
 with great attention, ‘that there might have
 been over-night a design of carrying you off;
 but the great company at supper, and who
 staid very late, might oblige them to defer it.
 This is a troublesome affair, and I am at a loss how to
 disappoint their enterprize: it is well the
 marquis is still here; he is fully sufficient
 to curb their insolence, and his interest in the
 affair will not suffer him to stand neuter.’ — ‘Good God, Madam!’
 cried I, ‘take care; he must not know that
 the chevalier is here, if it be he: be pleased to
 recollect what has already passed between those
 two rivals, and the dire resentment they bear
 to each other.’ — ‘Heavens! what have I done,
 to deserve so much cruelty at your hands!’ This
 exclamation was attended with a flood of tears.
 ‘But,’ continued I, alarmed at the danger which
 surrounded me, ‘would it not be best for me to
 make my escape, whilst it is practicable?’ — ‘Good
 God! whither would you go, my dear child?’
 cried Madame De G——, interrupting me. ‘Besides,
 you cannot imagine but we are observed: nevertheless,
 I must approve of your proposal, as it is the only
 expedient for preventing the intended mischief:
 as for this village, it is not only inconvenient,
 but cannot afford one man who will face any
 of the people I have seen. It is true, now I
 think on it, there is a place of security, not far
 off, where you would be welcome; but besides
 the chevalier’s spies, I apprehend the marquis
 himself will oppose the execution of such a
 design; he is far from satisfied in the situation
 wherein you left him; he must see and talk
 farther with you; lovers never think they have
 said all: and, as if these obstacles were not enough,
 Monsieur Gripart, my husband, your relations,
 are all waiting for us.’ — ‘That signifies nothing,
 Madam,’ cried I;

I; 'tell me but the place, where you say I shall be safe from these pursuits, 'I will run any hazard to reach it.'— 'The abbess of a monastery about two leagues from hence,' replied Madame De G——, 'is my particular friend, and owes her fortune to me.'—'Dear Madam,' cried I, kissing her hands, 'order somebody to conduct me thither; every moment is precious; I tremble: do you acquaint Monsieur De G—— what has happened, whilst I join the company, and put the best face I can on the matter. When you have contrived the means for my escape, upon the least item, I will slip away, or feign an indisposition, which will not be suspected after my fainting-fit; they will imagine I am in my chamber, and consequently make no enquiry; as for the rest, I have been used to riding, and if a horse be provided at the end of the village, I shall easily join the person you appoint for my guide.'—'Ah! Jenny, Jenny!' cried Madame De G——, taking me in her arms, 'how ingenious is a virtuous mind; your scheme is perfectly well concerted, and will, I hope, succeed. Depend upon it, you will always find a mother in me; your virtue at once charms and interests me in your behalf.'—'Indeed, Madam,' replied I with tears in my eyes, 'I will sooner forfeit my life than my reputation; but, alas! I am going to lose you,' added I, crying very heartily. 'No, no, Jenny,' replied Madame De G——, 'I shall ever be a tender parent to you; I will come to see you, and when things are settled will bring you back. Dry up your tears, and let us not lose one moment.'

Madame De G—— embraced me, and we were on the point of leaving the room, when the door was thrown open on a sudden. It was the marquis; he fastened the door after him, looking upon us with distraction in his eyes. 'I have heard all that has passed, Madam,' cried he, addressing himself to the lady; 'there is a design to rob me of Jenny, but you must take my life first. Alas! what have I done to deserve such treatment? Heavens! cannot my wretched condition move your pity?' Saying this, he threw himself at the lady's feet, and took me by the hand, assuring us both that I should not go away, let what would happen; and that

if we did not immediately promise as much, he would lay himself dead at our feet.

The apprehension for my lover's life, the danger he would be exposed to in meeting with the chevalier, who might every moment surprize us and open a tragical scene, emboldened me to act in a manner far different from my inclinations and usual behaviour. 'Rise, my lord,' said I, looking stedfastly on him, with a dissembled anger, 'and if you really love me—' 'If I love you? Ungrateful creature!' replied the sorrowful marquis; 'is this the first time? How well convinced ought you to be? What I have suffered—' 'I ask it as a favour,' continued I in the same tone, 'that you would hear me without interruption; and since I may depend on your affection for a punctual compliance with what I am going to propose, I shall look upon such a deference as a convincing proof of what you have so often vowed; otherwise you must expect no return from me. Call reason to your assistance; without it, love is but folly. I should be unworthy of the regard you express for me, and what you seem to propose, did I blindly follow the dictates of your passion; sooner or later, you would be the first in making me repent my weakness. The intentions you have declared in this lady's presence, leave me no room to doubt of your esteem, the greatness of which honour I am fully sensible of; but the more you debate yourself in my behalf, the more I ought to rise above myself. She is no longer Jenny, the country lass, who speaks to you, but a person inspired by the honours this lady has conferred upon her, and elevated far above her birth; who reserves herself for you by such methods as you will one day approve of, and who, through a disinterestedness not very common, sacrifices to you a present establishment for an uncertain one to come; for who can assure me that you will not change your mind hereafter in regard of one who has nothing but her virtue to balance the wretchedness of her birth. I am engaged to Monsieur Gripart, and to-morrow I must receive him for a husband; a monastery is the only means left me to ward off the blow you dread so much, and to prove

‘ prove how entirely I am yours. Would you, therefore, by an unseasonable opposition, compleat a marriage which must separate us for ever? The cloister will be an honourable pretext; and, by declaring a vocation of a long standing to it, I may with credit break through the engagements I am under. Can you be so unreasonable as to oppose a project, entirely formed to oblige you alone? This, my lord, is what I had to say. I shall argue no longer: but I solemnly declare,’ continued I, in a very positive manner, ‘ if you will not agree to such proper methods, and retire from hence this very moment, I am resolved to marry M. Gripart, and never see your face more.’

Saying this, I turned my head aside, lest my tears should betray me. The marquis rose quite astonished, seized my hand, and bathed it with his tears. How dangerous is a man beloved, when he appears in such an attitude! A virtuous young woman should never look on such a spectacle; and it was happy for me that so respected a person as Madame De G—— was present; otherwise, my heart would have soon recalled what my virtue had advanced. On such occasions, flight is our compleatest victory. I forced my way, and shut myself into a closet. The lady at last appeased the marquis, promising to send him an account of me; and behaved so well to him, that after expressing himself in the most affectionate terms in my regard, he retired. My heart was attentive to all he said, and shared his transports. Ah, Love! if thou dost afford some sweets, thy pains are cruel! My lover was no sooner gone, but all my resolution vanished. I ran over every syllable he had uttered, and the weakness I am going to acknowledge, is at least a balance to the lofty airs I just now assumed: I have my choice, whether to divulge it or not, for no one can contradict me as to what passes in my own breast; hitherto I have concealed it, but in entering upon these Memoirs I professed sincerity, and am resolved to keep my word; besides, it may perhaps be of some service to young persons of my own sex, for whose benefit I write these Memoirs, to be let into the methods I was so fortunate as to put in practice for curbing the vivacity of inclination; a rock on which they are frequently cast away, and which cannot be avoid-

ed, unless not only sure guides in the paths of virtue be consulted, but all occasions are carefully shunned, of calling to mind such deluding ideas. Excuse this digression: those who think it tedious, will do well to skip it; the book will be the sooner read.

As soon as Madame De G—— was rid of the marquis she went to her husband: the account she gave startled him; he was of the same opinion, that it was highly necessary to remove me. A trusty servant, according to his direction, carried me that very evening, unperceived by any one, to the monastery of St. N——, where I was courteously received.

The continual disquiets I had undergone, harrassed me too much to think of any supper. Being desirous of going to rest, I was conducted to a neat little chamber, and presently went to bed, abandoning myself wholly to grief. The greater part of the night I suffered cruelly; the marquis, present to my imagination, seemed still to lament himself at my feet: I comforted him in a language, alas! far different from what I mentioned before. How happy would he have thought himself had he been by! I blamed myself for not giving him the tenderest proofs of my affection. Those who know what love is, will easily enter into my condition, and must own such a night to have been very frightful. The oppression I laboured under at last gave place to a broken, terrifying sleep, arising from my present circumstances; I dreamed of nothing but rapes and duels. Methought the marquis, overpowered by the furious chevalier, with his last breath protests his love. O Heavens! I am seized by the conqueror. This dream was so lively, that I started out of my sleep with a loud shriek.

The sun was already above the horizon, and shone into my cell; I cast a melancholy look on the several objects which surrounded me: a large wooden crucifix, with a death's head at it's foot, made me shudder; a torrent of tears ensued. When the heart is oppressed, every thing affects it; a devout reflection terrified me; I thought a crucified God, whose sufferings I there saw represented, reproached me with my weakness. Alas! what could I address to him but my tears: and they were very plentiful. I threw myself at the foot of the crucifix,

cifix, I called upon God, and found my affliction abate. I thought he spoke, teaching me that patience of which he shewed himself so perfect an example. Looking towards one end of my chamber, a picture, of hell, wherein multitudes of devils were represented tormenting the damned, struck a terror into me; I turned away my eyes from so hideous a sight. 'Alas!' I thought, 'I shall one day fall a prey to these enemies of mankind, if I continue thus to follow the bent of my inclinations!' Our curate's exhortations came fresh into my mind; I prayed to God to have mercy on me. Nature must yield when long assaulted; I grew faint, and threw myself into the bed again, pulling the cloaths over me. I shivered, and as often as the idea of my lover offered to resume its usual sway, I drove it from me with great earnestness, looking from time to time on the crucifix, as a salutary antidote against such a deluding poison. Part of the morning was spent in this manner, when my chamber door opened: 'Ave!' said an ancient nun coming in; 'dear Miss, how have you rested? What, not up yet? Madame De G—— is below in the abbess's parlour, who has sent for you.'—'Good God!' cried I, transported at such agreeable news, 'how long has she been here? How does she do? What does she say?' I asked a thousand questions at once. 'Put on your cloaths,' replied the good nun, without giving me any answer; 'you will know all by and bye; you are waited for: but be sure you say your prayers before you leave your chamber; the first duty of the day is to offer our hearts to God. Somebody will come for you in a quarter of an hour.' Saying this she left me, counting her beads very devoutly. I jumped out of bed very hastily, saying my prayers and dressing myself all at once, to save time, expecting to hear of the marquis. How small a matter dries up a fit of devotion, founded only on the folly of a passion! Madame De G——'s arrival replaced the marquis in my heart. 'But, my God,' said I, with an air of confidence, 'I love thee with all my soul; and may I not reserve a little love for a man whose intentions tend to nothing but what is lawful?' I began to think myself not so very much to blame. My heart was busied in regulating these

things suitably to its inclinations, when another nun, whose beautiful countenance was exceedingly amiable, came into my chamber, telling me in a very engaging manner, she was come for me. 'Good God!' said she, 'you have been crying: I am concerned for you; I am apt to think you do not relish a monastery. Alas! you are not the only one.' I looked earnestly at her, finding a comfort in what she said; but she cast down her eyes, and seemed vexed with herself, for speaking her mind so freely. There are persons, the first sight of whom gains our affections; this handsome nun was one of that number. I embraced her with great tenderness, after which we went down stairs.

When I came into the abbess's parlour I ran hastily, without reflection, to Madame De G——, who was at the grate. 'Good morrow, my dear,' said that good lady; 'but you ought first to salute your worthy superior: she is of a sweet disposition; I have spoke to her in your behalf, and she is willing to take the charge of your education.' Struck with this harangue, which boded me no good, I turned to the abbess, and kissed her hands; she embraced me, bidding me not to cry, (for the tears stood in my eyes.) 'She never was among religious people before,' said she, 'I perceive; she is frightened, but use will make it easy.'—'Pardon me, Madam,' I cried, thinking she meant that I had no religion, 'I love God with all my heart.'—'I don't doubt it,' answered the abbess with a cough of a quarter long; 'I believe you are very devout and very virtuous.'—'She is a very good girl,' added Madame De G——; 'the air of a convent is not very agreeable at first, but there are many things which require patience and reflection; but more of that another time.' Saying this, she winked upon me, as much as to say, 'Stay till we are alone; I have a great deal of news.'

The abbess having mastered her cough, with plenty of mallows and liquorish to loosen her husky lungs, began to open again, and make a confidante of her old friend Madame De G——, concerning all the little animosities on foot in the convent; she gave her a long detail of the various humours and different interests among them.

• Would

‘Would you believe,’ said she very vehemently, not thinking of her weak breast, ‘that the director, our dear father, who had always been my friend, that he should behave with great coldness to me? Surprizing! The very first time I perceived it, I employed Mother Gertrude, in whom I have an entire confidence, to find out the reason. Could you imagine, my dear lady, what I then discovered? that he was grown very intimate with Mother St. Elizabeth; who, whilst in the world, as well as here, you know, never loved me! Now judge whence the blow comes. Nevertheless, God is my witness, I made a sacrifice of my resentment, it being in my power, as abbess, (unworthy) to make her sensible of it; instead of that,’ continued she, growing warmer and thumping the board, ‘I have promoted her to the best offices in the community, even that of treasurer; judge now, treasurer! so considerable, that in one point she may controul the abbess herself. She is a very serpent whom I have cherished in my breast.’ That word was very distinct; passion uttered it, while charity was forgot: it is true every invective was qualified with a *God forgive me*; but still *she is a very serpent* was the burden of the song. ‘To rob me of the friendship of our director, our father, such a father! he that absolves us, purifies us, and conducts us to heaven! Do you apprehend the great consequence? Ah, Madam! I shall never be comforted.’

This conversation, which from my longing to be alone with Madame De G——, became insupportably tedious, was fortunately interrupted by a nun’s coming in with her veil over her face; at her entrance she bowed to the ground, and then kissed the abbess’s hands, who very devoutly embraced her head, telling her to put up her veil, for there were no men present. ‘What would you have with me, dear mother?’ continued the abbess. The nun began to whisper in her ear; but she certainly thought we were deaf, for she spoke so loud that I heard every word. ‘Mighty well,’ replied the abbess, ‘I am coming; do you stay for me on the stairs. —Would you believe,’ said she, addressing herself to Madame De G——, ‘what they are doing? there is another cabal on foot. I am told, three of the

‘ancients, and the good father and director, are now plotting against me in the Trinity parlour: there is a private place from whence I can overhear them, unless my continual coughing does spoil all; but Heaven will support me. Adieu; mum! you see the consequence.’ Saying this, the abbess retired, giving me a little pat as she passed by, and muttering something to herself.

‘Come near, Jenny,’ said Madame De G——, as soon as we were alone; ‘let us take this opportunity the abbess has given us, to whom what I have to say to you must be a profound secret; we should be ruined, were it known you are the cause of what has happened last night. Resolution is requisite, my dear; the news I bring will not be very agreeable, but rather far from it.’ Here she paused a while to recollect herself. This melancholy prologue went to my heart, and scarce left me strength to hear the new catastrophe, which she related in the following words.

‘You had scarce left my house,’ continued Madame De G——, ‘when M. Gripart came to me in a violent hurry. “What is this I hear, Madam?” said he; “I had like to have been finely bubbled here; I chanced to overhear two footmen talking together in the park, otherwise my market would have been made in a very notable match truly! Would any one have believed that she could look so demure, and yet marry a husband and retain her gallant? I had pleased myself with the thoughts of making her fortune; but, thank my stars! I am very easy as to that particular: the only thing which gives me any uneasiness is, Madam, that you, who know how much I am your friend, could see me thus imposed upon, being no stranger, in all probability, to this country girl’s behaviour. Whoever thought it so easy to gull me, were much mistaken; for I would have the world know, that the Griparts were never taken in yet, and what’s more, never will; and whenever I am fool enough to commit matrimony, I’ll warrant before-hand the success of my choice.”

A small digression must be excused; for it would not be fair to let any of the heroes in this history make their exit, without communicating to the reader

der their various fortunes. As to this, he proved no prophet, for in a few years he married the noted Miss Fanny, —, the ticket suffices. Her cunning was such during M. Gripart's courtship, that he never suspected her virtue; and fortune was so favourable to her, that though she was in keeping to the very wedding-day, he never discovered it; nay, it might always have remained a secret to him, if her ill, unguarded conduct, after marriage, had not extorted from him, notwithstanding all his prevention in her favour, an acknowledgment of his wretched destiny. In his first transports, he raved like a madman; beat her, and confined her, as he said, for life. However, his anger abated, and in less than a twelvemonth he brought his wife home again; but quite another woman; her confinement had afforded leisure for proper reflections on her former behaviour, and she is at this day a pattern to the best of wives.

Let us return to what Madame De G — was relating to me. "In spite of all I could say to M. Gripart," continued she, "he went out dissatisfied, got into his chaise, and went away murmuring. My husband in the mean time had put every body we had under arms, to protect us in case of an attack; but it proved an unnecessary precaution as to our house; chance disposed of things otherwise; and it was said, there was no foreseeing the misfortune that was to happen."

"The Marquis of L. V. was no sooner retired, (which, notwithstanding all I told him to the contrary, he did with so little precaution, pretending the servants by the Chevalier D'Elbieux knew his livery) than they acquainted their master, who was highly enraged at it; imagining, that under the appearance of marrying you to M. Gripart, they intended to make his rival happy. With this prepossession he hastily quitted his post, and entered the court of the castle, with his attendants, sword in hand. He furiously demanded the marquis; and striking a terror into those he met, obliged them to shew him which way he went. The fright into which he put a shepherd, was the reason of his being wrong directed as to the road your lover took, and that he pursued the road M. Gripart had taken. The chevalier, who went full

gallop, was not long before he came up with a valet de chambre belonging to the financier, who was following his chaise at some distance."

"The chevalier began the tragedy, by fetching him down with one of his pistols; after which, he pursued his way. Gripart, at the report of the pistol, looked out of his chaise, and seeing his valet fall, thought they were attacked by thieves: he immediately got out of his vehicle, and, through fear, fell on his knees in the middle of the road, with his purse in his hand, begging in a suppliant manner for mercy and his life. The Chevalier D'Elbieux in his fury rode over him, without the least regard to his intreaties, thinking to find the marquis in the chaise. As soon as he got within reach, he discharged his pistol; the ball went through the vehicle, and shattered the postilion's shoulder. D'Elbieux was surprized to the last degree, when looking into the chaise, he did not meet with what he sought for, but found himself mistaken, and his rival escaped. The way being narrow, he once more rode over the unfortunate Gripart, now quite crippled: but he ran on his own ruin; the time of vengeance was come; Heaven was going to punish him for all his wicked attempts."

"The Marquis of L. V. who was returning very gently home, like a chagrined lover, awaked from his melancholy with the noise of pistols, and turned his horse with precipitation towards the place from whence it came. "O Heavens!" he cried, "Jenny is on the road! Can this be any thing regarding her? some fresh enterprized!" "We are always solicitous for what is dear to us, and apt to recal to our minds the most tragical events. The marquis, struck with this idea, entered the road we have just now mentioned full speed. He was too well acquainted with the Chevalier D'Elbieux to mistake him. An empty chaise, the peasants flying and imploring succour, the lamentable outcries of maimed Gripart, two men laid on the ground; all this seemed to intimate to him a second rape. As to D'Elbieux he had the same opinion of the marquis; he sought him too earnestly to avoid him: his eagerness to be revenged made him forget his
H . . . pistol

pistol was discharged; and he faced his rival with it unloaded in his hand. "Thou shalt not escape," cries he, as soon as he came up to him, pulling the trigger in vain; "I will make thee know a second time the Chevalier D'Elbieux." The marquis, without answering him, gave fire, and lodged the whole charge in his body; the shock of which was so great, that he dismounted the chevalier from his horse. "Receive the punishment due to thy crimes!" says the marquis, alighting and presenting the other pistol at his head: "thou art a dead man this instant, if thou dost not tell me where Jenny is, and what you have done with her."—"I have not seen her," replied the Chevalier D'Elbieux, in a low dejected voice. "I confess, I had formed a design of taking her away this night, but hearing by chance you was at the castle, and suspecting you might also intend to secure her to yourself for ever, I quitted the place, where I lay concealed, in pursuit of you."—"Art thou sincere?" cried the furious marquis, fearing lest he should be imposed upon. "Yes, truly," replied the wounded man; "you have vanquished me, and may take your revenge: afford me but time to recollect myself, and to implore God's pardon for all my offences; my eyes are open, I see my errors, and I am in the utmost anguish for having committed them. Pray forget—" Here, through the loss of blood, the chevalier's speech failed him. The marquis, whose sentiments are generous, was moved to compassion; after ordering his servants to help him, and carry him to the castle, he left him, and came to me in the mean while, to acquaint me with this transaction. Do but judge, my dear Jenny, of the grief with which this fatal news has overwhelmed me!

"Fly, Sir! fly!" I cried, as soon as he had done speaking; "this is an affair of the utmost consequence, and I greatly fear lest it plunge you into such an abyss, as perhaps we shall altogether find great difficulty in extricating ourselves."—"Alas!" replied the marquis, "the plain truth will clear me; but I tremble to think of my charming Jenny. If her azile, where she now is, should take air at

court, you may depend upon it she will be confined the remainder of her days, by virtue of a *lettre de cachet*." I answered, "I am not uneasy on that head; measures have been so well taken, there is but one man, and he I can depend upon, who knows of her retreat; besides, that she passes in the convent where she is for a relation of mine, who has thoughts of becoming a nun, I have prevailed with her father and mother to say, that their daughter had absented herself, and they knew not what was become of her. Thus, you see, let them make what search they please, it is impossible to discover her."—"Now I begin again to live!" says the marquis, kissing my hand. "Go, get you gone," says I, "time is precious; perhaps they are even now in search of you: I will not have you stay to make me any answer. As soon as you are secure from all accidents, let me hear from you, and I will inform you of what regards us."

The marquis was scarce gone, when word came they were bringing in the Chevalier D'Elbieux. Motion had brought him to himself. My husband's surgeon, who never leaves him, on account of an apoplexy, of which he is in danger, has probed the wound; he thinks it dangerous, but says, however, he may get the better of it.

The valet de chambre belonging to M. Gripart was killed, and his master is so full of contusions, he will not be able to stir these six months; the postilion lies dangerously ill: in short, dear child, my house is become an hospital. As we are very much beloved upon our estate, we have desired it might be a secret: it was not talked of this morning; but I much apprehend I shall hear dismal news at my return. I ran hither in a hurry to prepare you, least, if it should happen that this story comes out, you may be upon your guard, not to let it be suspected you were the cause of these tragical events. You must affect a great deal of unconcern; without that you are lost yourself, and will involve us all in the same fate. Such, Jenny, such are the effects of your cruel charms. I wish to God you had been less beautiful, you had then inspired less love! Had I hearkened to Ma-

demoiselle

'demoiselle D'Elbieux, we had avoided
'a great deal of chagrin!'

This last stroke of Madame de G—'s was a thousand daggers in my heart; I was in such a consternation as to remain motionless, without being able to utter one word: my tears, as well as voice, stuck in their passage; and I should have fainted away, had not a nun, who came in, supported me; it was her for whom I had conceived so great an affection; she came from the superior to make her excuse for not returning. This amiable young woman, alarmed at the condition in which she saw me, took me in her arms, with a thousand tender caresses. Madame De G—, moved with these marks of amity, recommended me to her care. 'Do not leave her,' says she, 'she is in trouble; there is nobody more capable than yourself to give her consolation. Her father will have her be a nun, but she had a reluctance to it; and this is the reason why she is so much dejected.'—'Ah, my God!' cried this charming young woman, 'why will they render her so unhappy? Ah, Madam! have pity on the poor child.'—'I can stay no longer,' replied Madame De G—; 'business calls me away, and I am waited for: assure her, when she comes to herself again, that I shall always look on her as my daughter, and that she shall soon hear from me.' Saying this, she went away.

Notwithstanding my fainting, I heard every word. My patroness was no sooner gone, but I found myself extremely out of order.

'Take courage, my child!' says young Saint Agnes to me, (for that was the nun's name;) 'I sincerely pity you; endeavour to bear up, and let us get to a convenient place: be not dejected, pluck up a good heart, I will set you an example; in me you shall find a true friend.' With these words, she gave me her arm, and conducted me to my chamber, where she immediately obliged me to go to bed. I lay a long time without uttering one single word, or making any other answer, but squeezing her most tenderly by the hand. 'Well,' says she, 'my good girl, sitting down upon my bed, how do you find yourself?'—'Alas!' replied I, bursting at length into tears, 'how do I find myself? the unhappiest

of creatures! there is a fatal destiny attends my actions; the most cruel events succeed one after another. Certainly,' says I, lifting my eyes to Heaven, 'never wretch was overwhelmed with so many misfortunes!'

'If it be true,' replied Saint Agnes, folding me in her arms, 'that the consolation of those who suffer depends upon their finding companions more to be pitied than themselves, you would soon be relieved. Behold, my dear child, behold in me, the most unfortunate of persons: were even your afflictions greater than they are, they could not be compared to mine. You at least are at liberty, but I am doubly engaged: under this veil I carry a wounded heart, pierced with a thousand darts; deplorable victim of caprice, I drag on a life of wretchedness, by so much the more insupportable, as I am obliged by decency, honour, and the interests of my relations, to stifle all resentments. What do I say? I have not yet had the comfort of a friend, to whom I might unbosom my secrets and my troubles. You are the only one to whom I have said so much, and for whom I have so tender a concern. Let us blend our misfortunes: make me your confidante; you are mine already; we shall reap equal benefit from our mutual afflictions. Shall it be so, my dear Jenny?'—'Ah!' replied I with great ardency, 'what comfort is it for me, in my present condition, to find so much compassion in a place that is so disagreeable!'—'How kindly I take your sentiments!' said Saint Agnes; 'your aversion to the cloister is so conformable to mine, you deserve, on that title alone, to be let into the secret of my affairs. I am going to lay open my heart to you; you shall judge how highly I value your friendship, since as soon as I know you, I deliver myself entirely up to you: we have still almost an hour to ourselves without interruption; I am persuaded my story will in some measure mitigate your sufferings.'

'I shall touch but slightly on my birth, although there was something very particular in it. I am of Pont-a-Mousson, in Lorraine, daughter of one of the principal persons of that town. My mother was extremely handsome, and married to a man of
H 2 quality,

quality, who generally resided at an estate not far from that place; she was five and twenty when I was born, and for some reasons, which I shall mention hereafter, she concealed her pregnancy, and was privately brought to bed. I was brought up under the notion of being a gardener's daughter who lived four or five leagues off. The first years of my childhood were spent in mean employments, such as suited with the profession of my adopted father. The jealousy of my two sisters, as I took them to be, rendering me continually the object of their hatred, was the reason why, out of mere pity, they charged me with the care of tending the sheep: the hardships with which I was constantly oppressed, made this occupation very supportable, and I blessed my stars for the alteration.

The lord of the village where I lived was named M. Melicourt; he was counsellor in the parliament of M——, and he came down to his estate every year during the vacation. he had a son who was in his studies, that never failed to accompany him thither. This young gentleman was very handsome, well shaped, and graver than those of his age: instead of employing himself in hunting or other pastimes, he spent part of it in reading; his only recreation was walking in the fields near the village in the cool of the evening. I met him almost every day with a book in his hand; as often he passed by me, and that was not seldom, he took off his hat. At that time I was near fourteen, lively, and liked young Melicourt extremely. Notwithstanding, I always looked down on the ground when we met, and should have been mightily vexed to have been deprived of the pleasure of seeing him.

One day, when I had drove my sheep near a warren a little way from Trefe, (for that is the name of the village) I spied young Melicourt asleep on the grass, under a beech-tree: I was not sorry for the occasion; my heart had long wished for an opportunity of gazing on him, without bringing my modesty in question. Though I was unacquainted with the effects of love, yet I plainly felt an inclination prevailing in my soul, and in spite of my low education, I had so

much command over myself as not to give a loose to it.

This favourable conjecture encouraged me; I was all alone, he fast asleep. I advanced towards him step by step, stopping sometimes for fear of waking him; in my hand I had a small stick, with which I moved the leaves to try if his sleep was sound. It was needless, for the youth gave me all the reason in the world to think he enjoyed a most profound repose. Thus encouraged, I drew very near him, my heart in my mouth for fear. Melicourt is of a brown complexion, charming eyes, sweet countenance, very fine hair, curled, and negligently tied up with a ribbon; in the attitude in which he lay, his face was entirely seen, on which there sat so much serenity and comeliness, that one could not behold it without delight. My tender heart was so sensibly affected, that its captivity was compleated by this rash scrutiny. There lay on the ground a book, and it came into my head to secure it; my father, who was schoolmaster at Trefe, had taught me to read: I was curious to know what I could make of this book. After I had put it into my pocket, I proposed to retire, lest I should be suspected of the theft; but I had not force to move, some secret power withheld me. Fatal curiosity to young persons, which often entangles them against their will! If I retired a step or two, it was only to return with greater eagerness. Melicourt was a loadstone, from which I could not separate; however, I was withdrawing myself, on his stirring, as if he had been going to awake, when a wasp came and settled on his face. I stooped immediately, too much interested not to stretch out my arm and drive it off; but it was done so awkwardly, or rather in such great confusion, that in endeavouring to remove this dangerous insect, I gave Melicourt a great slap on the face. He bounced up in a sudden surprize, and muttered some words, which I did not understand, I was so frightened. On my endeavouring to run away, he snatched hold of my gown, and with a smile that quite charmed my heart, "Tell me," he said, "my pretty maid, what in the name of God have I done to you, that you should disturb my rest."—"Alas, Sir!" answered

“swered I, all in amaze, “I ask your pardon; my intention was not to hurt you: being in search of a strayed sheep, I happened in passing by to see a wasp just going to sting you; I immediately ran up to prevent it, and the hurry I was in might occasion the hurt you complain of.” Whilst I was making, with a dissembled innocence, this apology, the youth examined me with all the attention imaginable, and expressed a wonder that seemed to flatter my vanity. When I had done speaking, he would have thrown his arms about my neck to thank me, as he called it, for the service I had done him. Covered with blushes, I avoided his intended kindness. “Dear creature!” he cried, “be not angry. Can you be displeased with the sallies of my gratitude? Pr’ythee, stay! I will be more reserved, if you think me to blame for yielding to the transports your charms have raised in my breast; you are the first that has been able to inspire them.” Taking me by the hand, “Good God!” said he, “how handsome you are! the only one to whom I ever said so much before, because you alone have appeared so in my eyes.”

“I pretended not to understand this discourse. But I do assure you, my dear child, young as I was, I easily comprehended it favoured too much of flattery; and notwithstanding my affection for this young man, I retired. “Ah! do not run away,” cried Melicourt, endeavouring to stop me; “the sun is not set, why will you deprive me of the pleasure of your company? “Cruel creature!” continued he, seeing me at some distance, “better for me to have been stung by the wasp! the smart it would have caused had been soon over; whereas the wound the dart has made that came from your eyes will never be healed.”

“While he was thus talking, I came up with my flock; Melicourt followed me at some distance; but whilst I saw him coming one way, I went another, under pretence of keeping my flock together: he soon discovered my roguery, and stood still with his arms across, looking on me with an air that I believe had a great deal of meaning in it. I seemed not to mind him, and went on to the village; and, often looking back, brought home an im-

pression that still lives in my mind. “You see what giddy girls expose themselves to through curiosity.

“I will not entertain you, my dear friend,” continued the nun, “with all the opportunities we had of meeting and conversing together. Young Melicourt had a tender, honest heart, and I prepossessed in his favour, it was not long before I owned to him the progress he had made in my affections; he was overjoyed at it, and in spite of my mean birth, he vowed to be mine for ever. Oh, what flattering joys! what happy days! But, alas! the vacation was expired, and he must go away; bathed in tears, we bid each other farewell, without any other comfort but the hopes of seeing each other again: for my part, though he promised a speedy return, I was inconsolable for three months. I uttered my mournful sorrow to my poor sheep, I trusted none but them; but their pacifick silence did not ease my distracted breast.

“Returning home one evening, more fatigued with the pangs of my heart than with my day’s work, I saw running towards me a daughter of the person who passed for my mother; she seemed in a great hurry, and by the signs she made had earnest business with me. I made haste to meet her. “So, Minette,” says she, (for that was the name I went by, because they thought me sly) “what will you give me for my good news? Do not be surprized; somebody is come you will be glad to see.” At this I could not help blushing; I immediately thought it was Melicourt she meant, or (as a guilty conscience needs no accuser) that our amour was discovered. I did not dare to ask my sister any questions. “Sure you have very little curiosity,” says she, and embraced me, which was very unusual for her to do. “Methinks of late you have been very indifferent as to every thing. Well, to punish you, I have a great mind not to tell you that there is come a fine great lady in a coach to our house, who asked for mother, and went into a room all alone with her; nor, that being curious, I contrived slyly to hear all their conversation. Marry, I know it all! I won’t tell you neither, that it seems you are not our sister, and that

“the

“ the lady claims you as her own daughter.”—“ How now !” cried I, struck with this discourse, (which would not have surprized me so much, if I had read as many romances then as I have since ;) “ what do you mean by all this ? By pretending to keep me in ignorance, you tell me strange things, and which I can hardly believe : I know very well you want to laugh at me ; for what can I think of all this story ?”—“ You may be in the right,” answered my sister very maliciously ; however, I suppose there is something in it, for I heard them telling money, and they say people take care how they part with that.” The girl had scarce done talking, when up comes another of my sisters, with the same emotion, crying out to me to make haste home, and leave her to tend the sheep, my mother having ordered it so. I obeyed, and came my ways. I was scarce got in, when my mother, or rather she I looked upon to be such, took off my handkerchief, and shewed a mark that I had on my neck to a fine lady there present. “ It is certainly her,” says the lady ; “ not that I should have doubted it though you had not shewn me this ; her face speaks it.” Then directing her discourse to me, “ My dear child, will you come and live with ?” says she, in a very gracious manner ; “ I have your mother’s consent. I’ll take care of you, and it will be an ease to her.”—“ Your ladyship is mighty good,” replies the gardener’s wife : “ Minette will go along with you with all her heart ; she is very tractable and good-natured. Your goodness will excuse her if she does not answer as she should ; she has not been used to fine folks.” The lady, not much minding what she said, got up and whispered something in her ear. I was ordered to go and put on my holiday gown in all haste, not to make people stay for me. I obeyed, quite dejected, and could not reconcile what my sister had told me with what I had just heard. I burst into tears as I was putting on my cloaths : “ Alas ! I shall never see my dear shepherd !” for so I called Melicourt at our endearing interviews : “ he will forget me, and I shall be undone. And what will become of you, my poor, dear little sheep ; shall not I make much

“ of you once before I go !” All these little reflections increased my fears : they recommended me to the lady and to my mother, being construed as the effects of a tender heart. I embraced, with the utmost affection, the parents I was going to leave ; it was a moving sight, and I believe our grief was mutual.

“ I was no sooner on the road, and alone with this strange lady, but I began to revolve in my mind all my sister had said to me. The manner in which I was treated did not agree with what she had flattered me withal. The lady seemed very thoughtful and abstracted ; she did not so much as speak to me, but seemed taken up with some very serious matter. As simple as I was, I could not help saying to myself, “ Sure, if she were my mother, what should hinder her, now we are alone, from embracing me as a daughter ?” I was tempted twenty times at all hazards to throw myself about her neck. We had not gone two leagues before a very genteel man on horseback rode up to the coach-door, and in a familiar manner saluted the lady. He looked very stedfastly on me all the rest of the journey ; asked me several questions, often saying I was very pretty.

“ This brought us to the castle, where we alighted. I went with the gentleman and the lady into an apartment, where they seemed to be expected to supper ; the cloth was ready laid, and they sat down to table. My supper was brought me to the fire-side, where the lady had placed me : their eyes were continually upon me. Notwithstanding the perplexity I was in, there was a *je-ne-sçai-quoi* that encouraged me, and made me find a pleasure in looking at them in my turn ; the lady often crying, “ Let me tell you this will be no slovenly girl when once she comes to have some good cloaths on.” The gentleman was entirely of her opinion : he made me stand up to consider my shape, and had the curiosity even to look at the mark on my neck. I was ashamed, and would not let him. “ There is no harm, Minette ; you need not be so reserved to that gentleman,” says the lady, “ whatever you are to others.” As soon as ever he saw the mark, he seemed extremely satisfied, and embraced me

me with all the goodness imaginable. All this put me so much out of countenance, that I could not swallow one morsel, although intreaties were not wanting. When they thought I had supped, a waiting-woman, whom I heard them call Mrs. Bretigny, was ordered to conduct me into a little closet that joined to the room. She bid me go to bed; and offered to help me to undress, caressing me very much. I did whatever she bid me. As soon as I got into a little bed that was prepared for me, she went out of the room, and shut a glass door after me.

I was too much disturbed with all I had seen that day, to fall asleep immediately: I could not help thinking of what my sister had told me, and had not forgot the very stratagem she made use of to satisfy her curiosity. One is more inclined to follow bad example than good; accordingly I got up as softly as possible, in order to hearken. I just lifted up the corner of the silk curtain that was over the glass door. The gentleman and lady were still at table; they spoke so low, I could not hear what they said, but could easily see by their motions they were on some earnest business. The waiting-woman had got into my place, and seemed to be of the consultation.

I began to despair of satisfying my curiosity, and was going to bed, when the lady unexpectedly raised her voice. "After all, my friend," says she, "what risk do we run, and where is the great harm for people to know, that instead of being in the islands, where you were supposed to be, you lay hid all the while somewhere near my house? My reputation won't suffer by that; the concealing my pregnancy and this child, the world will know, was to favour your supposed absence; but since your affair, thank God, is made up, I see no reason why we should not own this child." — "Bless me, Madam!" replied my father, (for I could not doubt but it was him;) "besides giving the publick a handle to talk, you fall into another difficulty you do not think of; your eldest daughter is married to one of the most selfish men in France: what will he say when you declare the birth of Minette, though you let him, as you certainly must, into the

whole secret of this adventure? He will not believe a word on't, and will look upon the child as supposititious, on purpose to be a joint-heiress with his wife; he will prosecute you: the world is malicious, and the court will be apprized of my non-compliance. You know very well when I had the misfortune to kill the Count of D—— in a duel; his family was prevailed upon to have the proceedings against me stopped, on condition that I departed the kingdom, the contrary of which we must prove, and consequently will make me liable to a fresh indictment. The repealing my banishment (which is now brought about by the death of him that was my greatest enemy in the affair) depends, as to its validity, upon my having performed the conditions imposed on me. Only reflect that this will spoil all, and, in order to prove the birth of this child, which your son-in-law will assuredly oppose, for the reasons I have just now assigned, you must make it appear, I repeat it again, that I staid in the kingdom, and did not comply with the precise orders of the court. These are my motives," adds my father; "can you, on your side, assign better?" — "My mother would not give it up. The meaning of all this is," says she in a great passion, "that this poor infant, who is your lawful daughter, must be deprived of her birth-right, to which she will one day be so justly intitled, and throughout her whole life will remain unacquainted with the condition to which she was born." — "I allow," says my father, "her situation is very unhappy. Times may alter; but, at present, how can we reconcile these matters?" — "There is no great difficulty in that," cried the waiting-woman, interrupting them, who not being sensible of the force of maternal affection, could not be expected so naturally to consult my interests: "Miss is young; she takes herself to be far different from what she really is; clap her into a convent, and make a nun of her; truly, she may think herself well off so. When she is professed, let her know that she is your daughter; nay, you may publish it, if you please. Pray, what can your son-in-law object to that?" — "The

—“The advice is not amiss,” answered my mother; “I will think of it.” My father said not a word; but it was easy to know, by the manner in which he sat musing, he did not much like the scheme. Silence ensued; and, thinking all was over, I returned to my bed, where I dropped asleep in the midst of a thousand perplexing thoughts.

Early next morning Mademoiselle Bretigny came to call me; she tried on several gowns that had been my sister’s; some of them fitted very well. I was dressed in an instant suitable to my birth; and from thence I went into my mother’s chamber. “Minette,” says she, calling me to her bed-side, “hearken well to what I am going to say. Your mother was formerly my servant. I love her, and for that reason I promised to take one of her daughters. I have pitched upon you, because I liked you: my intention is to place you in a monastery for education; you are old enough, and have sense to know what is for your good. If they knew you was but a country girl, they might not shew you all that regard I desire, in the house where I am going to place you: if it should happen you have a mind to be a nun, they would not admit you on account of your birth; therefore it is now come into my head to make you pass for my niece just come from Provence. I have bid Bretigny instruct you to this purpose; she shall go with you this very day to M——, where you shall have cloaths made; then you shall come to me again, where you shall stay till you have got rid of your fashions, that you may enter the convent without disgracing the name you bear.”

Whilst my mother was thus talking to me, I looked at her very earnestly; I could not help being moved: my father was gone, and left me alone with her. I burst into a flood of tears. There is no getting the better of nature, it will recur on all occasions; my mother was an instance of it; she could not contain herself, but caressed me with the utmost affection: unless Bretigny had come in, she would have betrayed all. “What are you about, Madam?” says the waiting-woman, as she entered the room; “there wants nothing here but my master.”

—“Pr’ythee, take her away,” says my mother, “I cannot bear it any longer.” At these words my tears redoubled; and now I began to act the part of a daughter, by shewing my obedience. Bretigny taking me by the hand, put me into a chaise, and we went away.

In vain did she try to make me speak, my heart was too full; I scarce could get down one mouthful at dinner. That night we got to M——. The first thing she did at the inn, was to send for the tradesmen, to bespeak what was necessary for me, which they promised should be ready in two days.

The next morning Bretigny having a great deal of business, went out in the town, but took care to lock me into my room; I went to the window quite taken up with all that had happened; Melicourt was not forgot. I was just then musing on the beginning of our amour, when I cast my eyes on a young man, who passed under the window; I thought I should know him, I looked again: guess my astonishment, when I saw it was my shepherd himself! Clapping my hands for joy, I called out to him: he looked up, and notwithstanding the alteration of my cloaths, knew me again. “Bless me,” cries he, “it is Minette!” He staid only to say that, and came running to the chamber-door. “Minette, Minette!” says he, through the key-hole; “let in your unfortunate shepherd. What transports! what joy! Who could have dreamed of you here! Is it on my account? How comes it you are no longer a shepherdess? Open the door quickly.” The poor boy asked me a hundred questions at a time. I let him know I was locked in; that I had a thousand things to say, but that it was impossible for me to speak to him through the door, when every moment we were liable to be surprized. He asked me how I came to be locked up; I satisfied him as well as I could. We agreed in a hurry, that he should lie hid in some part of the house, and that as soon as Bretigny came in, I was to endeavour to get loose and come and talk with him. He went away, but promised me that, notwithstanding his school-hours, to which he was still unfortunately confined, he would not quit the house till

‘ he had assured me of the sincerity of his passion: we agreed upon a signal, and as it was a publick-house, he took the opportunity of calling for a break-fast.

‘ If he had stayed a moment longer Bretigny had caught him. The pleasure I had conceived at the sight of my lover, was easily seen in my countenance; she immediately took notice of it. “ There’s my good girl,” cried she, and embraced me; “ I love to see you so pleasant and gay, it makes you as pretty again!” with a great deal more of the same kind. I answered her very cheerfully, as there is nothing like a contented mind. Bretigny was soon called away about business, of which she had a great deal upon her hands. Love is very instructive: in order to compass my design, I fauntered from one room to another, backwards and forwards, as if I did not know what to do with myself.

‘ The deceit passed, and Bretigny did not observe me: as soon as I saw the coast clear, I gave the signal to Melicourt, who watched me; he came instantly to the foot of the stairs; I pointed with my finger to a room, he stepped into it, and it was not long before I joined him.

‘ I am apprehensive, fair lady,’ says the nun, fixing her eyes upon me, ‘ lest I should give you a bad opinion of me. Do not you think it a little too bold in me, to have taken these steps at the age I then was? but love and my want of education may serve to excuse me; I thought there could be no harm in this meeting. As soon as Melicourt saw me, he threw himself at my feet. I will not repeat our conversation, it was very affectionate: an account of all that had happened to me, my birth, the private project of my parents, nothing was forgot; I loved too much to hide any thing from my shepherd. “ The alteration,” says he, “ that has happened in your affairs, charming Minette, does not in the least augment the respect I have for you. Your elevation is so far from pleasing me, that it clashes with the purity of my intentions: I delighted myself with the thoughts of one day making my shepherdess’s fortune; and may I depend upon her loving her shepherd as

“ well as she did before?” I encouraged him as well as I could; it was love that spoke, always eloquent: but when Melicourt heard where I was going, and the designs they had against me, he burst into sorrowful complaints. “ Alas! how wretched am I,” says he, “ not to be my own master! I would frustrate all these proceedings. Must you go, then, dear Minette? shall I never see you again? must I lose you for ever?” In pronouncing these words, he cried most bitterly. “ Alas!” answered I, pierced to the soul, “ I cannot cease loving you. Young, and obliged to silence, dependent of all the world, tears and sorrow is all I have to send myself with.” This mournful entertainment was interrupted by Bretigny’s calling me. I had forgot myself; leaving him in haste, I had but just time to squeeze poor Melicourt’s hand, and came in with great precipitation wiping my eyes. “ You have been crying,” says the waiting-woman; “ that is not well done; you shall not be left alone again in haste: come near the fire, and let us see no more on’t. I’ll hear how you can read; that will pass away the time agreeably.” She gave me the Lives of the Saints, to prepare me betimes for the life I lead at present; (it happened to be the Life of St. Agnes.) I read it aloud; but (from my heart’s being taken up another way) all this martyr said, with a tender devotion, I appropriated to the present disposition of my soul. The reading had such an effect upon my mind, that I began again to shed tears in such abundance I could not go on.

‘ Bretigny took things quite in another light; she said she was glad to see I had so much religion; and took occasion of making me a fine exhortation on the subject: as soon as this sermon was over we went to supper, and I waited impatiently for bed-time. As soon as I found myself at liberty I called to mind all Melicourt had said to me; the more I thought of him, the greater aversion I had to a monastery. I could not but wish things would take such a turn as to make me happy with my shepherd. I dwelt with such pleasure on these ideas, it was all my comfort: nothing flatters young people more than the thoughts

of matrimony: how comes it they are so much indulged in it? A child can scarce speak, when they ask Miss if she is almost married yet. Little master is called her little husband: parents are apt to idolize their own offspring; they make these matters the subject of their diversions, and are always talking of them. Would they not do much better to be more reserved, especially before young people, who in proportion as they grow up, grow more knowing as to all the objects around them? future prospects, the more they please us, the deeper impressions they make. How wretched are they from whose breasts such deep-rooted ideas must be torn away!—But, to return to our history.

The next morning my cloaths were brought home: I found so great an alteration in myself when I was dressed, I seemed another creature; even my way of thinking was altered. Why should different situations elevate or depress our sentiments? a great deal of my past life recurred to me, that appeared very contemptible. Bretigny interrupted this discussion; as soon as she had finished all her affairs, the chaise was at the door, and we went away. I looked round for Melicourt; I thought he ought not to omit this occasion of seeing me, and I was truly mortified not to discover him.

We had scarce got four leagues on our journey, when coming into a narrow road, I saw a pilgrim walking by the side of the chaise, who often fixed his eyes on me; I was so taken up with sorrow for having been deprived of the sight of my lover, that I took no notice of this man. Bretigny bid me mind him. “Look, Miss Minette,” says she, “at this poor young man, how he is forced to walk in these bad ways: he has something very agreeable in his face; perhaps the perfections of his mind may answer those of his body! How unjust is fortune! Is it not frightful that at his age he should suffer so much hardship, whilst there are people without half his merit, who wallow in riches.” I was looking at this pilgrim whilst she was thus talking to me: imagine my surprize, it was Melicourt; I knew him notwithstanding his disguise. It was very lucky for

me that Bretigny, who had taken a great liking to my lover, put her head out to bid him take care of the wheel, otherwise she would have discovered the confusion I was in: my eyes had met those of Melicourt, which made me blush and look down, but I smiled in my heart. I was sorry, however, to see him walking thus in the mire. He seemed very chearful, and taking this opportunity of Bretigny’s civility, fell into discourse with her: he said, he had been performing a pilgrimage, and that he was two hundred leagues from home. The waiting-woman blessed herself at this, and told him he ought to rest himself. Melicourt, who perceived he had gained the good-will of this woman, endeavoured to please her. He had learned from the postilion, with whom he had been talking, that she managed every thing in the family; he thought he could more easily attain his ends, and secure her in his interest by amusing her: to this purpose, he told her extraordinary stories, just as they came into his head, I believe, with which she seemed enchanted. We were now come to the place where we dined. Bretigny made the pilgrim sit down to table with us; telling me I should never be haughty to the poor, and that one was obliged to assist them especially on the road: you may imagine I did not contradict her.

If ever you have been in love, my dear Miss, judge of the pleasure I felt in the enjoyment of my lover’s company, who gave me such evident marks of his tenderness. I will own to you frankly, all my cares ceased; how great soever my shepherd’s joy might be, he possessed himself very well, and with great address made me sensible, that though he made his court to Mademoiselle Bretigny, it was for my sake. It was comical enough to observe him hesitating every minute, and to see the good waiting-woman helping him out in his story: she carried her affection so far for the pilgrim, as to propose to him to ride behind our chaise, lest he should fatigue himself with walking; and I believe, if there had been room in our vehicle, she would have incommoded herself to receive him.—Love, love! no age nor condition is secure from thy darts!

While

‘ Whilst Bretigny was gone to pay the reckoning, Melicourt took the opportunity to speak to me; he said a hundred endearing things. “ I am sensible,” said I, “ of the marks you give me of your passion; it grieved me to see you on foot whilst I was at my ease; but, dear shepherd, tell me what all this signifies? We must part, had we not better do it now?” —“ Ah, charming Minette!” says Melicourt, in a very sorrowful tone; “ must I then die? Do you know that my life depends on the happiness of seeing you; and that I value nothing so much in the whole world? To bid me go and leave you! O Heavens, what a cool indifference is this! What can I think? You no longer love me!” In uttering these words, tears came into his eyes. Moved as I was, reason came to my assistance. “ Hide your tears,” says I, “ stifling my own; alas! I love you, it is but too true; but if I am dear to you, and that you will not leave me, take care Mademoiselle Bretigny, who is coming in, perceive nothing of it; if she does we are lost: she would suspect something; endeavour to please her, her interest is considerable; she seems prejudiced in your favour, and if I am not mistaken, you are not indifferent to her; that will facilitate our seeing one another. I do assure you, my dear shepherd,” continued I, giving him my hand, “ that thought is not at all disagreeable!” As he was going to answer me, Bretigny came in, to tell me we must go: she had contrived it with the postilion that the pilgrim should be seated behind the chaise at his ease; each of us took our place, and in this manner reached our journey’s end.

‘ The castle which we entered did not seem to be the same which we went from; this was much larger and better furnished, whereas the other, belonging likewise to my father, had been inhabited only since he was obliged to be concealed. My mother received me very affectionately; and, as Bretigny had instructed me, I called her aunt; to which I had much ado to bring myself, knowing how false it was.

‘ Melicourt was not neglected: Bretigny had been talking with him, as we came out of the chaise, and find-

‘ ing that he was qualified to serve in the capacity of a steward, she promised him she would procure him that place; in the mean time he must be content to be under him who was then in that office, which could not last long, being extremely old and infirm. Melicourt received joyfully these marks of the waiting-woman’s regard. The part she has in my story is too considerable to neglect giving you her portraiture.

‘ She was five and forty, and looked well for her age: I cannot tell if she had been handsome in her youth; at least she had no remains of her having been so: her complexion much upon the wainscot; blue eyes, round, and a little spotted; her eye-brows but thinly sown, and were scarce perceptible; they withdrew themselves with such an antipathy from her eyes, that she appeared always in a fright; her mouth was well enough, had it not been for a wart upon her upper lip; one could not say that a down covered her chin, but she had a strong bristly beard she could never destroy. She had a peaked chin, which naturally presented itself as a handle; the rest was as usual, and like other people; flat cheeks raised up by two strutting bones near the eyes; had a hoarse voice, the last syllables generally terminating in a false treble; her forehead was so little, that her head-cloaths, always ruffled, hung over her eye-brows; she would have been pretty well shaped, only she was larger in the waist than about her shoulders, which made an exact shape the wrong way.

‘ Her humour was agreeable enough, remarkable from her childhood for a tender heart, but the infidelity of several lovers had given her a disgust to the conjugal state. The youth, or rather the engaging behaviour of Melicourt, removed these disgusts, and rekindled her dying flames. She took his compliments to be sincere; and her heart going now as fast as it had been slow in determining before, took the resolution, as she was rich, of making Melicourt’s fortune; and things were so disposed, that without an unforeseen incident, this would have produced a most extraordinary mistake. All this while I received daily lessons for the regulating my

conduct. Three weeks were now passed since I had been at the castle. The time grew near when I was to go to the monastery; Melicourt and I often bewailed the hard fate that was going to part us. Love, that extended his dominion in our hearts, had so enlightened our minds, we carried ourselves in such a manner, that nobody in the family suspected us. But of what use were all these precautions? We were going to be separated. However, Bretigny's passion for Melicourt put the most ridiculous stratagem that ever was employed into my lover's head, for securing our happiness. "Dear Minette," says he to me one day in the garden, where we often met one another, "I adore you, you cannot doubt it. Though they conceal your birth, it is not the less certain: you cannot judge me capable of imposing on you in regard to mine; so that things are pretty equal, and can be no obstacle to our union. In the mean time they are sacrificing you, and you cannot be ignorant they design to oblige you to take the vows! Reflect only how miserable you would be, if that should happen; you would infallibly languish all your life. Take courage, the time presses; let us employ this interval to ascertain our felicity. What can happen from it, though we should be discovered?"—"What do you mean?" says I, quite confounded.—"Let us beware that nobody suspects our correspondence; you would ruin me. I have told you the reasons that obliged—" "I know that," replies Melicourt hastily; "but if once you go into the convent, I shall never see you again; you will be compelled to become a nun, and there will be an end of all my hopes."—"Alas!" cried I, "how shall I prevent it!"—"Dare but do what I tell you," continues Melicourt. "Bretigny has been pressing me this fortnight to marry her; at first I opposed it, but I have since thought I could take that opportunity to unite us."—"What's that, ungrateful man!" cried I, misunderstanding what he said; "can you forget your oaths, who you are, and betray me to that degree!"—"Ah, why do you reproach me!" says my lover; "is it to forget you, to seek the means of

uniting us for ever? Adieu! here comes somebody," continues he; "I will give you an account of my project as soon as I can, and if you love me as sincerely as you have given me room to flatter myself, we shall easily surmount all difficulties." We were obliged to part: he slipped into one of the alleys; and, seeing my mother come, I went to meet her. Although she had armed herself against her natural tenderness for me, she gave me continual marks of it under the name of niece.

In the mean while my father returned from court. His arrival decided my lot. They declared to me, that in eight days I should go into the convent. I had no reason to expect otherwise. I was not prepared for this stroke: from that time my aversion to the cloister grew very manifest. I had not seen Melicourt for three days; I thought I had a thousand things to say to him. I went into the garden to walk away my uneasiness, with grief painted on my face.

I was just going in again, when I saw at a distance Melicourt coming up to me singing. I took it heinously ill of him. "You are very happy, for your part," says I, when he was come near me, "to rejoice whilst I cry! I believe you intend it me as a favour, that I may leave the world with less regret."—"Fie! charming Minette," says he, putting on a sorrowful countenance, "how cruel is your reproach, and how little do you know me! If I have appeared easy, it is because it now depends on you to unite us with indissoluble bonds: the day is fixed, the priest is ready; Bretigny, that woman in other things so discreet, has engaged him; he is her cousin, a preceptor, about two leagues off. This man owes every thing to her: she has explained the whole matter to him, and he will do every thing she desires. She will have the ceremony performed in the night, and will keep it secret till she be gone from hence. I have pretended to agree to all this, intending thereby to engage us two more than ever. The preceptor is to be here to-night; he knows me: I have seen him several times on this affair. There is no distinguishing objects in the night time. Instead of perform-

ing

ing the ceremony at two o'clock, I will advance the time, and you and I will be in the chapel at twelve: the bad light, and the head-dress you will have on, covering your face, will befriend the project. In fine, when we are joined, we shall do very well for the rest." I could not help laughing at this pleasant contrivance; but it gave way to serious and pressing thoughts that occurred to me. "The stratagem is practicable," replied I, "but where would be the use of it, if it did succeed? By the little knowledge I have of the world, I plainly see such a marriage is not according to form: but, suppose it should be, since I shall be forced to hide it, shall I go the less to the convent? For my departure is unalterably fixed since my father's return; perhaps they have fresh reasons for burying me alive in a cloister."—"It is for this reason," replies Melicourt, "that we must lay hold of this opportunity. We will fly; the wide world lies before us. Are you not sensible of the cruelty they shew in your regard," continued Melicourt, to influence me, seeing me fluctuating; "the shameful sacrifice they are going to make of your liberty, your birth-right, and fortune; of which they will frustrate you under the most frivolous pretences? Is not all this sufficient to alarm you? Ah, dear Minette! young as I am, these things strike me with horror. I know the respect and obedience we owe our parents; but it is not forbid in such a case to seek for the means of putting them in mind, that they who gave us birth—but no more of this. I agree with you that we shall be removed from one another. If you once enter the cloister, who can rescue you from thence?"—"In what manner," says I, "will this marriage prevent it? To run away is what I can never bring myself to. If you declare this match, I am undone; if you conceal it, it will be the same thing to me. Pray how do you propose to come off with Mrs. Bretigny? I suppose you intend to marry her." I could not help laughing at these words; my lover did so too, notwithstanding his serious face. Youth will assert its privileges. "Good God! my dear Minette," says he, putting on his air of importance again,

"you are mighty prudent! you overwhelm me with difficulties that I did not foresee."—"It is what we must think of, for all that," says I. At present, all I can say to you is, that I will suffer the last extremity before I will become a nun: I have an invincible repugnance to it, and I will lay any thing in the world you are the cause of it."—"O, very well," continued Melicourt, "I stand, then, to my first proposal; I may possibly improve it. But be sure you hold yourself in readiness; I will come and fetch you when it is time." My lover quitted me in pronouncing these words, and I returned to my mother's apartment in a terrible agitation. However, I behaved myself so as not to let her perceive it. I was taking up my work, but she called me. "Draw near the fire, niece," says she; "I want to speak to you." I did so, not suspecting what she had to say to me. In this discourse, all the objections vanished I had formed from my low education, against the project of the night, and to which I had before this a most insurmountable repugnance. "You know very well, Minette," says my mother, "who you are: from the time I first saw you, I had compassion of your condition; it is on that account I have preferred you. You kept sheep, you was at all times exposed to the extremity of heats and colds; own to me how many hundred times you lamented this your life, and see what I have done. In order that you might be the more considered, I take you to my house, where you pass for my niece: you seem to deserve my regard; I must try to compleat your happiness. I am sending you to a nunnery; pray to the Lord to keep you there: the world is full of trouble; those who are born to be the happiest in it, groan under its disappointments; every step we make chagrins us; if you had more experience, I would convince you by a hundred examples before your own eyes. Marriage for people of your condition is a source of troubles; not to mention the risk of falling into bad hands; besides the danger and misfortune that attends it, the detail of which is shocking. Look therefore on the cloister, whither you are going, as a safe port

"against

“against all the storms of this life,
 “where you will be securely sheltered
 “from all these rocks. If the grate has
 “a frightful aspect, custom will render
 “it pleasant and easy: it is in retire-
 “ment we truly enjoy ourselves; plea-
 “sure is resigned with great difficulty,
 “by those who have had an early ac-
 “quaintance with it; luckily for you,
 “it is not your case, but a very little
 “reflection gets the better of the dis-
 “likes of the children of this world.
 “When the occasions are removed, they
 “disappear of course. You will not
 “resemble those religious persons, de-
 “tached from the world, indeed, yet
 “who not only carry the remembrance
 “of it in their heart, but even look on
 “it in their parlour, as through a win-
 “dow, from whence they never retire
 “but with constant regret for having
 “embraced that state of life. For your
 “part, dear Minette, it will not be
 “your case; the simplicity of your
 “heart will make you find a thousand
 “charms: taken up with the thoughts
 “of your salvation, with a tranquil life,
 “and a thousand innocent amusements,
 “you will pass away your days in se-
 “renity and peace of mind. I will
 “come sometimes to partake and envy
 “your happiness.”

“These last words seemed to soften
 “my mother: her eyes were full; she
 “strove to hide her tears by turning
 “away and covering her face. I was
 “too much moved to dispute any part
 “of Nature’s right over me. “Ah,
 “dear mother!” cried I, throwing my-
 “self at her feet, “what have I done,
 “that you should make me a sacrifice?”
 “She embraced me; these words escaped
 “me, and my passion got the better of
 “the rule I had imposed on myself, ne-
 “ver to betray my secret.

“My mother, however, understood
 “but half the import of these words.
 “The time was favourable. Ah! why
 “did I not take hold of it? Quite pos-
 “sessed with my ignorance on this sub-
 “ject, and sustained by the aforesaid
 “reasons, she began again. “You are
 “in the right,” continued she, “my
 “dear Minette, to call me a mother;
 “yes, you are in the right, I repeat it;
 “you will know one day, when you
 “are a nun, that I am really so.” This
 “word nun pierced my heart; and such
 “cruelty towards me, suspended the
 “sentiments I had for my mother. I

“thought no more but how I should
 “snatch myself from the state they de-
 “signed for me. Policy took the place
 “of filial tenderness; I constrained my-
 “self, and kept up the conversation with
 “so much calmness, that it was impos-
 “sible to know by my countenance
 “what passed in my heart.

“People coming in upon business, I
 “took the opportunity to go and find
 “Melicourt. I went backwards and
 “forwards; my enquiry was in vain.
 “Into the garden, into the back court,
 “I asked for him every where; nobody
 “had seen him. My heart trembled; it
 “presaged something. Fatal prognos-
 “tick! I went out of the castle, and
 “came into a lane that led to the vil-
 “lage: I thought at the end of this
 “lane I should find my lover. Alas!
 “do we carry in our hearts the tokens
 “of what is to come? Ah, Madam!
 “what do I see? (forgive my tears) a
 “chaise and four men, who seize Meli-
 “court! he sees me, he cries out, he
 “resists. Vain efforts! he is now at a
 “great distance.

“This sight had so startled me, I stood
 “immoveable: as long as the chaise
 “fixed my eyes, I remained in that pos-
 “ture; as soon as it was gone, I wept
 “bitterly. Happily for me that I was
 “alone, nobody heard my lamenta-
 “tions. I came in, like one distract-
 “ed. Supper was ready, the bell
 “had rung, they were looking for
 “me. The first I met was Bretig-
 “ny; she had a joy in her face, that
 “soon vanished, when I told her what
 “had just happened. “Oh, Heaven!”
 “she cried, quite furious, “what is it
 “you say? I am in despair. You shall
 “know the reason another time; go
 “and sit down to supper, I’ll run to
 “the village, and know what’s the
 “matter: no, stay; you are all in tears!
 “poor child; good-natured thing! Come
 “along with me, they will be asking what
 “ails you.” On this, away she runs;
 “and we soon reached the inn where
 “this scene was transacted. The respect
 “they had for Bretigny, whom they
 “looked upon as the mistress, made
 “them answer immediately to her ques-
 “tions, and they gave us this account.
 “Four days ago,” says the landlord,
 “a gentleman came here in the even-
 “ing, with three more men; he pass-
 “ed for a recruiting-officer: his first
 “questions were, who lived at the
 “castle,

“castle, and what entertainment there was there. You know, Madam,” continued the landlord, “it is my business to please all the world; I satisfied him; the captain spent his money very freely: but what surprized me was, that he eat with his men; and instead of running about like those who recruit, and are upon the watch for young fellows, he kept close. One of his comrades went out from time to time, and as soon as he came in spoke to him privately. This humour was carried on till this day, without my troubling myself about it, because he paid me very well.

“About an hour ago, Madam, this pretended captain, warming himself at the kitchen fire, said aloud to one of his servants, “Go and tell that young man whom you see coming out of that house, there is one here would speak a word with him.” Mr. Brunet [for it is by that name Melicourt went at the castle] came in a minute. The poor lad little thought of what was preparing for him. Before he entered the inn, the officer whispered in my ear: “You are going to see a little bustle, landlord,” says he. “Can you guess who that young man is that I have sent for?”—“No, truly,” answered I surprized; “I know him! he does business for our lord, and every body gives him a good word. What, is there any thing bad against him?” “we all love him.”—“I believe you,” says the officer, “and it is because he is beloved elsewhere we are going to take him away. I give you warning, in case he should pretend to resist, to be quiet. He is son to M. D——, counsellor in the parliament of M——; he is a loose one, and went away without saying a word; we have been in search of him ever since: only for M. De R. Lord of Bise, who knew this young man carrying a letter to a preceptor, and had often seen him at his father’s, we should not have known where he was.

“The valet de chambre, for such he was, had scarce pronounced these words, but the young man came: he instantly knew his father’s servant, and turned as pale as death. “Come, Sir,” says the valet de chambre, “take courage, there is no harm: I am

“glad we have found you; you must along with us, your father expects you.” During this discourse the poor boy would have escaped; but seeing himself collared, fought like a dragon, though the number overpowered him; and, in spite of his efforts, they put him into a chaise ready for that purpose. They have scarce been gone a moment.”

“Bretigny was so astonished at this news, that she went away without answering a single word. As soon as we were got by ourselves, she squeezed me by the hand, and began to cry bitterly. I joined in the chorus very sincerely: this poor woman embraced me with affection, imagining my tears to be the effect of my compassion. She gave me my lesson, as we went along, what I was to say when we came to the castle, lest when they should know this adventure, it should appear that we had any sort of concern in it.

“Three days after this cruel accident, spent, as you may well believe, in tears, my mother brought me hither: I was received with a great deal of kindness and friendship. No artifice was left untried to induce me to take the veil. The sorrowful air I had not yet laid aside, into the cause of which they did not penetrate, gave room without doubt to think I had no relish for the cloister: this was, too, contrary to the interests of the house, by reason of the portion they expected with me, not to use their utmost efforts to make me change my mind. Liberty is a charming thing; I was entirely left to myself, not being suspected of any intrigue. I went, when I would into the parlour; they never followed me, nor hearkened after what I said. Bretigny would often come to cry with me: she told me she intended to go to M—— to get some tidings of her beloved pilgrim. Alas! little did she know with what impatience I sighed to hear from the dear man.

“One day, as I was walking by myself in the garden with a book, that precious book I mentioned in the beginning of my story, and which I so much valued because it belonged to my lover, the nun who waited at the turn, came and told me, there was an officer, who called himself my relation, waited for me in the parlour.

“This

“ This news startled me; I did not know who this could be, unless it were somebody who came from my lover. I flew to the parlour; scarce was I entered, when the sound of a well-known and much-loved voice, swift as lightning reached my heart. “ Is it you, then,” said I to him; “ is it you?” I had not power to say any more. Drawing near, I gave him my hand through the grate. He took it, he moistened it with his tears, he hurt me, he knelt down, he cried, he talked, and all this without being at all sensible of the matter.”

The nun was at this part of the story, when somebody came and interrupted her, to tell us they were in the refectory; we got up, and agreed to return to my chamber after dinner was over.

I will not describe to you the modest, quiet manner, in which thirty of these holy women devoutly made their meal. I was taken up with weighty cares, and if I had been obliged to give you an account of a pious lecture that was then made, it would have very much puzzled me. The superior rang a bell that was over her head: every body rose from table; grace was said; and St. Agnes and I returned to my chamber, where she resumed her story.

“ As soon as I was recovered from the disorder into which the sight of my lover had thrown me, I wanted to know, to what lucky accident I owed so charming a pleasure, and after what manner he had made his escape from his father’s house. “ Could you one moment doubt,” cried he, “ so much in love as I am, that I should not find an opportunity of returning to you, supposing even things had not taken the fortunate turn they now have? Nothing can ever shake my constancy, if you continue in the same sentiments.”—“ Can you doubt it, ungrateful man!” says I; “ the tears I have shed in your absence, and the alteration you may easily perceive in me, are but too sure proofs.” Melicourt, transported with this acknowledgment, at which however he ought not to have been much surprized, expressed his sentiments for me in the tenderest manner. I enquired into the most minute circumstances of what had befallen him, ever since the moment he was forced from me. I began by imparting to him the present

situation of my affairs. “ We shall put an end to them,” replied he, “ if you will enter into the lawful measures I shall propose to you; but, in order to prepare you for it, I must give you an exact detail of all that has happened to me since I saw you.

“ You have no room to doubt, lovely Minette,” continued Melicourt, “ of the anguish that seized my soul, when I saw myself taken; I wearied all those who had a hand in carrying me off. The valet de chambre cursed a thousand times the commission he had undertaken. In reality, he had enough to do; and if it had not been for the precaution they took, and the constant watch they kept over me, I should have abandoned myself to all the excess of my passion. In this condition I arrived at my father’s house. They gave him an account of all my extravagances, and of my refusing to take any sustenance. On this consideration, he changed the conduct he had proposed to himself in my regard; and, instead of the chastisement he intended for me, treated me with great lenity. Nothing would appease me. Is there any consolation for a person truly in love? All his complaisance was to no purpose; I was determined not to eat till I was at liberty: all possible endeavours were thought of to compel me to it. I persevered in this frenzy, and after lying four days in continual transports of passion, on the seventh I was seized with a fever.”

“ Here I interrupted Melicourt, to let him know how sensible I was of these proofs of his love. He was touched with the marks of my tenderness, and thus resumed his discourse.

“ When my father found the thing to be serious (for he always imagined that they privately brought me vic-tuals) he came to me, the better to clear up his doubts. The condition in which he found me, startled him extremely: nothing less than my life was at stake; this was evident, and he was very sensibly affected. Taking me by the hand, he awakened me from the dosing into which the violence of my illness had thrown me; gave me his word of honour, if I would admit of some assistance for the re-establishment of my health, he

“ would

“ would leave me quite at liberty to
 “ go where I pleased. I could depend
 “ upon his word; his favourable pro-
 “ mises induced me, in my turn, to be
 “ governed, and become all obedience.
 “ In order to give him the first proofs
 “ of it, I took some broth before him.
 “ The house rung with joy at this
 “ change in me; my mother ceased to
 “ cry, whose continual tears could never
 “ induce my father to what I de-
 “ sired. She came to my bed-side,
 “ and embraced me with the most live-
 “ ly transports, confirming to me what
 “ my father had said; and added, on
 “ her side, all that could contribute to
 “ my entire satisfaction. But all her
 “ tenderness had like to have been to no
 “ purpose: the many days I had been
 “ without taking any thing, had so in-
 “ flamed my habit of body, and ruined
 “ my stomach, it would retain nothing,
 “ and I lay two days at death’s door.

“ The extremity to which I was re-
 “ duced, soon put an end to the joy they
 “ had conceived of my recovery. Tears
 “ and apprehensions succeeded in it’s
 “ place. My mother never went from
 “ my bed-side; however, through their
 “ care and assiduity I recovered by
 “ degrees, and a fortnight after they
 “ judged me out of danger.

“ When I found myself in a condi-
 “ tion to talk, my mother behaved her-
 “ self in such a manner as to gain my
 “ confidence, by tenderly complying
 “ with me on all occasions. I made
 “ her acquainted with the situation my
 “ heart was in; and you are sensible,
 “ dear Minette, that could not be with-
 “ out betraying your secret, for which
 “ I ask you a million of pardons; but
 “ I thought it a lawful indiscretion, in
 “ order to forward the point I had pro-
 “ posed to myself. My mother heard
 “ your history with astonishment; she
 “ went directly and told it to my fa-
 “ ther, whose surprize was still greater.
 “ He would be satisfied of all these par-
 “ ticulars from my own mouth; I made
 “ him master of the whole affair you
 “ had imparted to me, as well as I
 “ could. He promised to take it into
 “ his serious consideration; he said you
 “ had equity on your side, and if there
 “ could be the least proof of your birth,
 “ he gave his consent to our union, and
 “ that he would afford me his assist-
 “ ance for the accomplishing all my de-
 “ signs.

“ Imagine my joy, adorable Minette,
 “ upon this promise coming from such
 “ a worthy father, whose weight and
 “ authority were sure warrants of it’s
 “ success. I would have thrown my-
 “ self at his feet; he withheld me,
 “ and prevented it. The ardent desire
 “ I had of seeing you again, and bring-
 “ ing you these good tidings, soon re-
 “ stored me to a perfect state of health.

“ In the mean time, my father, who
 “ had not forgot his promise, did not
 “ permit me to languish. He told me
 “ the law was on our side, O charming
 “ Minette! and that the proofs which
 “ I alledged were sufficient for you to
 “ be loudly proclaimed the daughter of
 “ Monsieur De —; that all we had
 “ to fear was, that being in the power
 “ of your parents, nobody would care to
 “ espouse your interest. I asked him his
 “ advice thereon, and his answer was,
 “ that it was not proper for him to ad-
 “ vise on the like occasion, but were he
 “ in my place, he would pursue it with
 “ the utmost vigour and resolution.
 “ These words were as so many oracles
 “ to me, and I knew how to expound
 “ them. I gained a chaplain to my
 “ interest, who had been formerly my
 “ tutor. I communicated to him my
 “ designs, hinting at the same time to
 “ him the tacit consent my father had
 “ expressed to me; acquainting him like-
 “ wise of how much consequence it was
 “ to expedite this affair. This man,
 “ who had the care of my education,
 “ and who knows, perhaps, better than
 “ I, the views of him who gave me life,
 “ has promised me his assistance, and
 “ has all the kind dispositions in my
 “ regard I can desire. Having taken
 “ these measures, I came away imme-
 “ diately. Judge of my despair, upon
 “ missing you at the place where I had
 “ left you. I spent three days in pursuit
 “ of you, till I found you here.

“ At present it is your turn, my
 “ dear Minette, to give me a proof of
 “ the affection with which you have so
 “ often flattered me. If you love me
 “ sincerely, you will not hesitate one
 “ moment to make your escape, and go
 “ along with me; you shall plight your
 “ faith to me, and I will do the same
 “ to you on my side; from thence I will
 “ conduct you to my father’s, who
 “ will instruct us in taking the proper
 “ measures our present circumstances
 “ require: you will find a second mo-

K “ that

"ther, more affectionate and more indulgent than her who has abandoned you to your ill stars; in a word, O Minette, you will compleat my happiness!"

"At this place Melicourt stopped, and fixed his eyes tenderly upon me, expecting my answer. I remained thoughtful for a long while; an extreme perplexity agitated my mind. What torments one suffers on such occasions! I was doubtful, and could not determine with myself: my lover easily perceived my incertitude; he continued to lay before me the most moving and most powerful reasons. The better to persuade me, he recalled to my remembrance the situation in which I was placed, by my parents slender regard, so different from what my birth and the ties of blood required: he did not forget to make me sensible that I was a victim they were sacrificing to a sordid interest they had then in view. In one word, that I was lost if I did not take a vigorous resolution; that I should be obliged very shortly to take the veil; that my profession would ensue, and that once done there was no longer any hopes. He said a great deal more equally convincing, making me clearly see the barbarity there was in rendering me unhappy for the sake of a sister, who ought to be no dearer than myself. This determined me. "Retire, my shepherd," said I to him, "I fear they will mistrust so long a conversation: be here again to-morrow at this time; I promise you an answer, and I fancy you will not be dissatisfied with it."

"I returned to the house in an agitation easily to be conceived. The aversion I had to the cloister inclined me joyfully to embrace the honourable means proposed to me for quitting it; but, on the other side, I judged the step so dangerous, I could not come to a resolution. Notwithstanding my low education, blood supplied it's deficiency, and my birth asserted it's rights. I thought it was offending in point of honour and decency to quit a convent, where I was placed, to follow a young man, blinded perhaps by his passion. The remainder of that day, and the night following, I passed in cruel incertitude. At last, love and the hatred of a convent car-

ried the day. I believed myself excusable as to those who had given me life, since they not only disclaimed me as their daughter, but treated me with unparalleled severity. After weighing these considerations, I inclined to the side that called me to happiness; the advantages that were proposed appeared to me to be solid. I had a father and mother, who refused to let me call them by that name; I found others who embraced that title, without any merits on my side. I took no notice to myself that it was the husband alone prevailed. Be it as it will, I entirely delivered myself up to these pleasing ideas, and thought of nothing but by what means I could get out of the fatal convent with the greatest privacy.

"What cannot love effect! Difficult as it was to make my escape without being discovered, this did not perplex me. An expedient occurred presently, and seemed to promise success. I had taken a fancy to the portress. She was merry and good-natured, and her employment engaged her in various affairs. I seldom quitted her, and enjoyed the company of all those who went backwards and forwards to the turn, as well as the news that was stirring. I often took an opportunity of answering for the portress, and to be with her when she opened the gates, as often as the affairs of the house required it.

"The keys of the inclosure were hung up in the parlour; the grate opened upon the outward portress's room. It often happened that I was alone at the door. I was perfectly well acquainted with all the ways about the house, and it was upon this idea I formed my measures.

"Melicourt was punctual to his appointment; I communicated my thoughts to him; he hesitated upon the apprehension he had of my being surprized in the execution of my design, in which case we should never have had the like opportunity again, or else I should run a risk of being once more removed by my parents. In his opinion, it was better to wait till night-time. I convinced him how difficult that would be; for as soon as night came, according to the rule of the house, the portress brought the keys of the inclosure into the superior's chamber,

chamber. I bid him be to of good courage, and shewed him, that provided he had his chaise in readiness at some distance from the convent-gate, and he could depend upon his horses, it would be easy for me to jump into the vehicle; and being once got into a village, there would be no danger of our being stopped, although they were to see me in the very instant of my flight: that the only critical moment was the opening the gate; but since I was once determined, I should take my measures so justly, and in so favourable a time, as not to be surprized in the fact. Melicourt agreed with me on the feasibility of this enterprise. He was charmed with it. Having settled what was to be done, we parted; and from that instant he held himself in readiness. I never could get a favourable minute; and according to our agreement, the affair was put off till the next day.

I passed that night in the most rack-ing anxiety of mind, nor ever went to bed. What seemed to me so easy in speculation, appeared much more difficult in practice. What comforted me was, that I was not in the least suspected; and as I generally rose late, I was resolved to execute my design whilst they were at mattins. Mother Portress was accustomed never to miss being present, and it was her practice, before we went, to put the key of the first door into the turn that belonged to the outward portress, that they might be able to do the business of the house. I left the door of my cell on jarr, by which Mother Portress was obliged to pass. I heard her by the jingling of her keys, and knew her step. I staid till she had done her business, and was gone to choir. As soon as I thought she was there, I ran to the parlour. You may judge of my joy when I spied the keys. I seized them, and opened the door of the inclosure. I had the presence of mind to shut it after me, and carry away the keys, that I might have time to join my lover, having all the reason in the world to apprehend being discovered by an old portress, who happened to be up, and who had asked twice, "Who's there?" and rang the bell; uneasy, without doubt, not to hear any body answer.

My prudence in locking the door

was what saved me, otherwise I should infallibly have been brought back again, on account of my being so long before I could get open the street-door, which had a very difficult lock. The nuns were run up to a window, saw my design, and cried out for assistance. Happily for me it was early in the morning, and nobody passing by at that time. Melicourt upon the watch, as you may imagine, ran up with a footman to the door, and used all his efforts to force it open. Seeing him so near, I recovered my spirits, and having bethought myself of making use of another key, in order to have the greater force in turning that which was in the lock, it opened all at once. I screamed for joy, and threw myself into Melicourt's arms, not without trembling, however, from head to foot. The nuns, desperately enraged at my flight, continued their cries, and we could hear them at a distance from the village. We went post that whole day, without stopping, and lay in a French village, where we were out of danger of being taken. The chaplain whom Melicourt mentioned to me, waited for us in this place; and suitable to the design, he had given notice to the curate, that he intended to say mass the next morning at break of day. Under this pretext he married us, in presence of four peasants who were witnesses, and signed a marriage certificate, (ready for that purpose) not suspecting the least contrivance. After this, we set out with mutual satisfaction; for my part, I was extremely pleased to follow a husband I loved, and glad to reconcile my inclination with my duty.

The valet de chambre, who was on horse-back, went before to M——, where he apprized Monsieur and Madame De Melicourt with what had happened. The kind reception I found, made me easily forget the small regard my real parents shewed me. It was nothing but *daughter* and *dear daughter* at every word; the whole house adored me; and I had all the reason imaginable to bless my lot: but, alas! how cruel are the turns of fortune! This proved but a short calm, that was soon to be followed by a dreadful storm. Ah! I cannot reflect on it without being seized with

"horror. Monsieur De Melicourt, who
 "wished neyertheless it might be made
 "appear who I was, finding considerable
 "advantages in my alliance, by reason
 "of the large estate that devolved to
 "me, in case it came to be confirmed,
 "he having but a small one, regulated
 "my affairs, and from the instructions
 "I had given him, drew up his remon-
 "strance, corroborated with undeniable
 "testimonies. He had been with the
 "gardener and his wife, at whose house
 "I had been brought up as their daugh-
 "ter. In order not to alarm these poor
 "people, he pretended he came from
 "Madame De —; and the more easi-
 "ly to impose upon them, gave them
 "some money, as an extraordinary re-
 "ward for the care they had taken of
 "me. During the conversation he had
 "with them on this subject, two indif-
 "ferent witnesses, very creditable persons,
 "were prepared and placed for that pur-
 "pose. My pretended parents, who
 "mistrusted nothing, and looked on
 "Monsieur De Melicourt as a steward
 "to Monsieur and Madame De —
 "made no mystery of an affair, with
 "which he seemed so well acquainted;
 "in fine, he was perfectly satisfied with
 "his journey: his nicety in doing every
 "thing according to form ruined us;
 "he threw off the mask as soon as he
 "had got what he desired out of these
 "people; he forgot his character of
 "steward, and assumed the commission-
 "er, obliged them to sign an acknow-
 "ledgment, purporting that I was none
 "of their daughter, but the daughter of
 "Madame De —. The gardener,
 "upon this, as well as his wife, guessed
 "they had been pumping the secret out
 "of them; and fearing lest my mother
 "should express her resentment against
 "them for it, they were no sooner at li-
 "berty, but they ran to acquaint her:
 "the uncertainty my father was in on
 "account of my flight, and who was
 "underhand making strict enquiry after
 "me, cleared up on the gardener's rela-
 "tion; he soon learned the sequel of the
 "adventure, and the name of my pro-
 "tectors. The business appeared to
 "him of too much moment to admit of
 "any delay; he immediately took post
 "and went to court, to prevent any ill
 "consequences that might arise from
 "it.

"In the mean time my husband's fa-
 "ther, having settled my affairs, sent

"me with his son to an estate at two
 "leagues distance from him; as he
 "thought proper to conceal our mar-
 "riage, and not declare it till he was
 "obliged, he apprehended the town was
 "too publick. Since he espoused my
 "interest, it is not for me to determine,
 "whether he pitched upon wrong me-
 "thods; but if I may judge of it from
 "the consequences, he could not have
 "acted more cruelly; perhaps a different
 "conduct in him might have rescued
 "both Melicourt and myself from so
 "hard a fate! But what do I say?
 "where is the place that is out of reach
 "of sovereign power?

"One night, as we lay quietly asleep,
 "we were awakened by our servants,
 "who came rushing into our chamber
 "all in tears. "Ah!" said they,
 "with what misfortunes are we all
 "threatened! the castle is filled with
 "martial men, and he that heads them
 "says he is come in the king's name.
 "Whilst they were saying this, in came
 "two exempts; both of them signified
 "their orders to us: my dear husband
 "would have defended himself; but,
 "alas! what could he do against twen-
 "ty men! For my part, I did nothing
 "but scream most dreadfully, bemoan
 "myself, and cry; but nothing could
 "mollify these barbarians; they forced
 "us asunder. I don't know what they
 "did with my husband: they brought
 "me hither, where the first thing I saw
 "was my father and mother; rage in
 "his countenance, and her eyes drown-
 "ed in tears. "Well, hussy!" says
 "my father sternly to me, "does it be-
 "come you to conspire against those
 "who have raised you from nothing;
 "to have recourse to calumny for set-
 "ting yourself at liberty, and getting
 "a husband? you have but two things
 "to resolve on, sorry wretch! either to
 "take the habit to-morrow, or perish."
 "Saying this, he held up his hand at
 "me. "Mind what I say to you: if
 "in two days you do not ask to be re-
 "ceived a nun; or if, as you have al-
 "ready done, you pretend to prate; ex-
 "pect no longer to find in me a pro-
 "tector, but an executioner." With
 "these words, he led me to the door of
 "the inclosure, whispered the abbess,
 "and retired.

"I won't repeat to you all the vexa-
 "tions and reproaches I had to suffer
 "from the superior: enraged at me for
 "the

the trick I had played her, in running away from her house, she was incessantly tormenting me, and for ever telling me, the best thing for me was blind obedience; that Monsieur De — had no mercy, and that as soon as I had taken the veil, it behoved me to behave in such a manner as to forget my former life. I passed that night and the day following in affliction, and on the third I entered into my noviceship.

I cannot tell, my dear Miss,' continued Saint Agnes, (for that was the name of this amiable person) 'what has happened since that time, nor what is become of Melicourt; all I know for certain, to my sorrow, is, that at the expiration of the year, my father, (whom I ought not to call by that name, on account of his barbarity) came here that very day, and sending for me, shut himself up with me alone, and told me in such a tone, that I still shudder at the remembrance of it, if I did not make my profession the next day or the day after, he would come and fetch me away, having taken most assured means of severely revenging himself for my disobedience.

In fine, what shall I say to you more? This cruel sacrifice has bound me for ever; I languish and I sigh: they use me with more kindness, it is true, because they think all is over; but what satisfaction can be made me? who can give me an equivalent for the torments I endure? Though I hide it from them, I bear in my heart my first engagement. Shocking state! My profession condemns these regrets; I am miserable for the rest of my days, and live in the horrible doubt of my eternal salvation.' On uttering these words, the sorrowful Saint Agnes wept most bitterly. 'Spouse of my heart,' she cried, 'still let me pronounce that name so solemnly acquired at the foot of the altar: ah! nothing shall ever efface thy dear image from my soul.' Sighs intercepted her speech. I was most sensibly struck with this sight; the circumstances I was then in, made it affect me the more, and partake of her trouble; I did my utmost to comfort her, and gave her such marks of my friendship, as to prevail with her so far as to mitigate her sorrow.

I was too much convinced of the sin-

cerity of the tender confidence Saint Agnes placed in me, not to manifest it to her, which I did by disclosing my heart, hiding from her no part of my history. She was pleased with these marks of my sincere attachment, and pitied my sufferings. 'But these may change, lovely Jenny,' continued she; 'you have the pleasure of hopes left you still; that is not my case; in my present situation, all is lost in this world for me: death, that puts an end to other people's troubles, opens to me the door to everlasting punishments. Which duty must I comply with? Am I a wife, or a religious woman? What do I say! I am both at the same time.' — 'Why did not you,' says I, 'plead your marriage to Monsieur De — when he would oblige you to become a nun?' — 'Did I not,' replied Saint Agnes; 'he knew it very well. What name do you think he gave our marriage? No better than folly and madness.' — 'But you ought at least,' replied I, 'to have protested against your profession as invalid, by reason of the constraint you were under.' — 'Ah! how could I?' answered this poor girl; 'all the time of my noviceship I never was trusted out of sight: of what use would it have proved to me, after my profession to rebel, but to have excited their greater severity against me?'

The severity of St. Agnes's lot appeared very plain to me; her misfortunes so united me to her, and we became so intimate, as scarce ever to leave each other: our mutual confidence proved of great consolation to me; but I was soon deprived of this relief, and I shortly experienced that Fortune was not weary of persecuting me.

Notwithstanding one ought not to have any faith in a thousand little superstitions that are apt to creep into young people's minds; yet I could not help being struck with a dream I had at that time, and which has proved the presage of what since befel me.

One of the boarders, called Renneville, the youngest of seven sisters, whose mother had married a young man of no fortune in second marriage, could not bring herself to the way of living in those religious houses: on this consideration, from her mortal aversion to the monastery, she had taken it into her head that she was not to stay there. Her inclination

tion for marriage carried her imagination into the wide world, and being of a very lively temper, she had recourse to practices, which an ignorant pride has devised for prying into futurity.

Saint Agnes and I were mightily diverted with the girl's company; she generally making one in our little parties of pleasure: without reposing an entire confidence in her, we were very intimate, particularly as to our aversion to the cloister. Our discourse frequently ran upon the means, though very chimerical ones, of obtaining our liberty, and scarce a day passed but Renneville amused us with some new discovery relating to it. Though cards were expressly forbid, she was mistress of a pack, which she consulted daily, and would fain persuade us informed her of what was to happen. Besides this, she imagined herself mistress of some secrets with regard to dreams, by which she could draw sure conclusions concerning futurity. Though Saint Agnes and I were above such non-sensical follies, nevertheless we often amused ourselves at her expence; every morning she was sure to tell us what dream she had the preceding night; then she obliged us to tell ours; all which she immediately explained according to her rules: but when we had a mind to vex her, which was as often as we were tired of her company, it was sufficient to declare, we did not believe a word she said; nothing to her could be more mortifying.

One evening, as St. Agnes and I were musing by my fire-side, De Renneville entered the room with an air that would have suited the most joyful tidings. 'Now, at least,' cried she, embracing us, 'you will no longer say 'I am mad; here is an infallible secret, 'to know our several fortunes by 'dreams: how glad am I!' continued she, clapping her hands for joy. Her transport set us a laughing. 'Nay, it 'is no jesting matter,' added she; 'when you know the method, you 'will be overjoyed, I will lay a wager. Here,' says she, pulling a book out of her pocket, 'here it is; aye, and 'in print too: I will leave you to judge, 'now, if there can be any doubt of it.' I opened the book, and found it to be *A Treatise of Dreams and their Significations, with the Art of procuring them.* There were several methods laid

down; I shall relate one, which, to oblige her, we were forced to employ.

It was required to be twice twenty-four hours without any supper, and the third day not to eat any dinner, taking no other nourishment at night than a cake made with half a pound of flour, without any salt, and instead of butter, worked up with the grease of a black hen and rain-water.

The black hen made a deep impression on De Renneville, insomuch that she warranted the secret infallible: a trial we were to make, and we three, on different days, feigned some indisposition or other, to be excused from appearing in the refectory. Saint Agnes was first initiated in the mystery, and had, as she assured us the next morning, a very extraordinary dream. 'There's for 'you!' cried De Renneville, addressing herself to me. 'Very well,' answered I, 'but let's hear the rest.' De Renneville looked very simply, when Saint Agnes added, that indeed she had dreamed very strangely all night long; but when she waked, she could not recollect a single circumstance. This would have cured me of any curiosity, but there was no quiet till I consented to try the experiment. Saint Agnes was blamed for having drank twice after the cake; whereas, according to what was expressly specified, it ought to have been but once: care was taken that I complied to a tittle with the directions.

I did not usually dream; nevertheless, whether my imagination was more than commonly agitated, as I am apt to believe, or that the secret really had it's effect, that very night I had a dream, which I shall never forget as long as I live. It was so uniform, and so very particular, that I can't forbear relating it: reason convinces me, that it was entirely accidental; nevertheless, it tallied very exactly with what has since happened.

I thought I had left the monastery, and was got into a troublesome road full of thorns and briars; the difficulty I found in advancing, made me look eagerly about for a better way. A path, which appeared at some distance through the openings of a hedge, made me very desirous to reach it, though all my endeavours were in vain, for the farther I advanced, the more I found myself entangled: but still I was
not



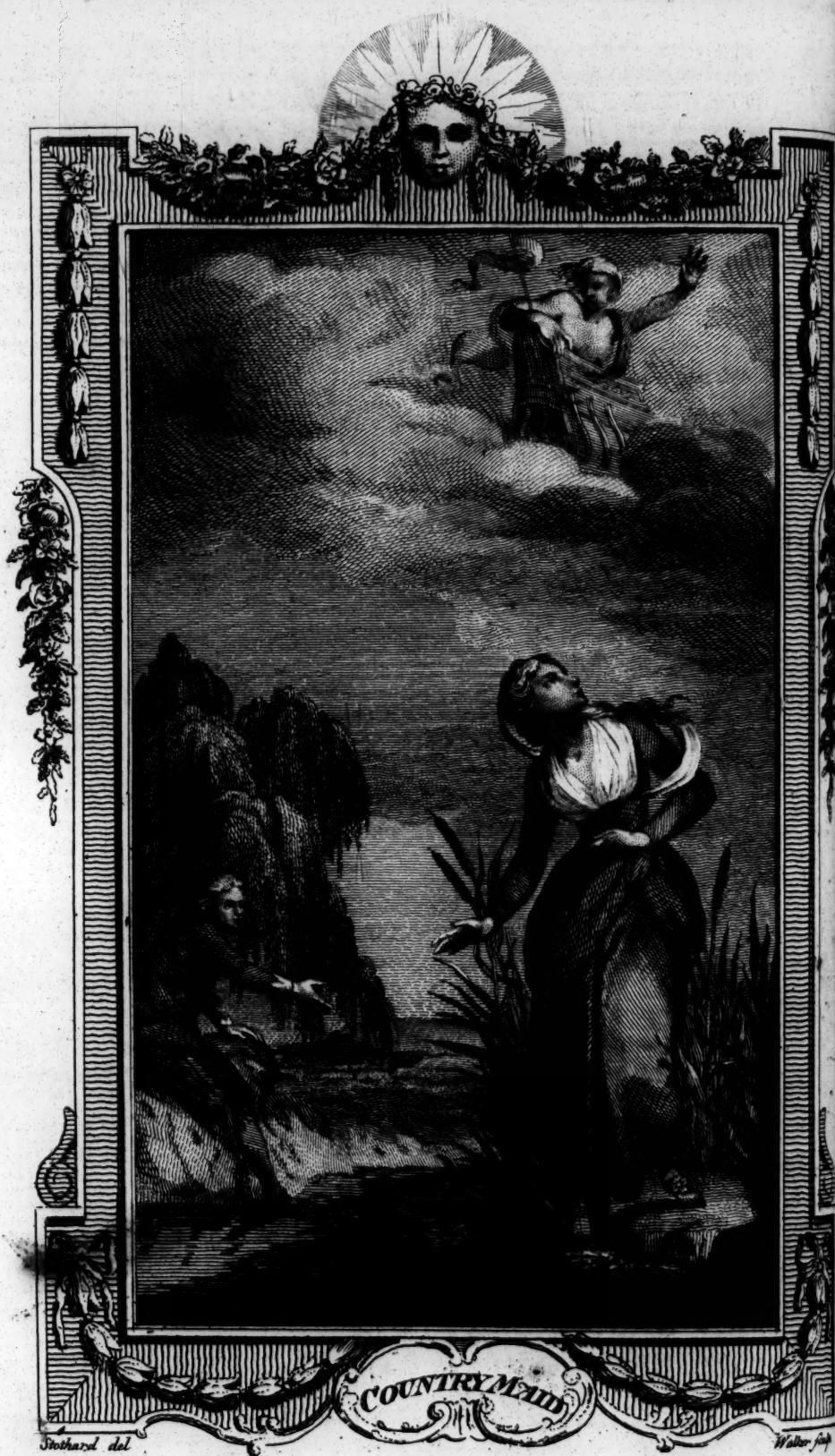


Plate II.

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not discouraged; the hopes of arriving at the path, making me slight all obstacles; nevertheless, I could not have surmounted them, had not a stranger pointed out a passage which brought me directly to him. I had no sooner arrived, but he began to lead the way, looking back from time to time, and smiling upon me. He was dressed in black, with a countenance so pleasing, that I followed him with great confidence.

We had walked thus about a mile, when we came to a large stream dividing the path in two. There was no coming to the other side, without passing the water, from which my natural apprehension of that element prevented me.

But this was no hindrance to the stranger, who seemed to walk on the water's surface; and, reaching the farther side, invited me to follow his example: but the fear of being drowned still prevailed. I went up to the bank, in order to find it passable above, but to my great surprize found it wider and wider: upon this I returned, and began to think of venturing over, to which the stranger invited me with the most alluring gestures; when I heard a voice in the air crying out, 'Jane, Jane, take care; if you pass the torrent, you'll be devoured by a monster.' Looking up, I saw in a cloud, which was flying away, a woman with a majestick countenance, seated, as it were, on the stern of a ship, adorned with several streamers waving in the wind, on which appeared the following words: '*Without virtue no one can arrive at their port.*' But in a moment the whole pageant was lost in the clouds.

I cast a melancholy look on the stream; the stranger redoubled his importunities for me to follow him; but, reflecting on what I had seen and heard, I returned very hastily the way I came. I was curious, through apprehension of being pursued, to look behind me; but, what a surprize! what a change! the stranger was become a hideous monster, in full pursuit to devour me! Fear gave me unusual speed.

Being now at a considerable distance, and as I imagined out of danger, I once more looked back towards the fatal place; instead of the stream, there appeared a black thick mist, sending forth a pestiferous vapour; through the clouds,

every moment, darted out sudden flashes of lightning, followed by incessant bursts of thunder, insomuch that I fled with the utmost precipitancy from so terrifying a scene.

As I advanced, I found the path gradually enlarged itself; it brought me to a delightful meadow, enamelled with a thousand beautiful flowers; the point of view terminated in a magnificent palace, whose structure appeared to be in the grand taste. 'Heaven be praised!' said I to myself, 'here, at least, my troubles will end; this palace is certainly inhabited, and I may possibly gain admittance.' With this hope I advanced towards the building, but was infinitely surprized, in arriving at it, to find no gate, though I looked earnestly on all sides. Night came on; the furious monster I had so lately seen alarmed me cruelly: 'I shall certainly be devoured,' said I to myself. Upon this reflection I burst into tears.

Whilst I was sinking under this perplexity, there came and fawned upon me a lamb, whose fleece surpassed the new-fallen snow; little garlands of flowers were tied about him with curious ribbands. He played round me so prettily, that I could not forbear returning him his caresses, which seemed very pleasing to him; but I was not a little surprized to hear him speak to me in the following manner. 'Follow me, Jenny; I will conduct you to a palace where happiness attends you.'—'Alas!' answered I, 'my pretty lamb, how can that be,' (thinking he meant that which was before us.) 'I sought a long time in vain to find the door.'—'Follow me,' continued the lamb; 'I'll shew you one presently.' I complied, but was uneasy to find we passed by the palace I had admired so much.

A pile of building, which I had not observed, was at a small distance, but as frightful as the other was charming; its walls were black and hideous; the entrance enormously wide, through which crowds of people were continually hurrying in, but few or none at least that I could discern, ever returned. Struck at what I saw, I stopped short. The lamb renewed his caresses to engage me to advance; I answered to what he alledged to prevail on me, that we had passed by the palace where I desired to be introduced.

Finding he could not succeed, he rose up

up an end, saying, 'Since fair means will not prevail, thou shalt know what I am.' In an instant his fleece was changed into a rough sad-coloured hair, his eyes rolling with fury. Let any one imagine the terror which seized me, when I beheld the same monster which had pursued me before! He flew at me, and my outcries echoed on all sides.

I was on the point of falling a prey to him, when a shrill distinct voice put a stop to his fury. 'Hold, fatal enemy!' it said; 'Jane refused of her own accord to enter thy palace, thou hast no farther power. Be gone, O Vice! this trial suffices; for the future my palace shall be her refuge.' These words pronounced, the same deity I had seen before in the air appeared again, covering her face that she might not behold so horrid a monster. Giving me her hand, she led me to the so much wished-for palace. We entered by a steep and narrow stair-case, which I had not discovered, and which brought us to a spacious temple, inspiring joy and content in all that entered. In it was placed the throne of Virtue, surrounded by a small, though select and noble attendance. Notwithstanding the solid pleasures which reigned in this happy abode, something, I thought, was wanting to compleat my happiness. But, pleasing delusion! all my vows were soon accomplished. Wisdom, who it seemed directed the ceremonies, conducted me to the altar: Heavens! what do I see there? the marquis! Our hands are united. My soul, unable to bear such an extasy, dies away—I started out of my sleep.

This dream made such an impression on my mind, that I spent two hours in reflecting on it. Saint Agnes and De Renneville surprized me in my meditation. 'I'll lay a wager,' cried the latter, 'you have dreamed of something, and have not forgot it.' As I was unwilling to make her acquainted with what had passed, I pretended the same excuse which Saint Agnes had made, that I could remember nothing of it. 'You are a couple of dissemblers,' says De Renneville, 'I see plainly; the secret is a good one, and you have found the benefit of it; but you are for keeping it to yourselves. Well,' says she with an air of scorn, 'I'll try it myself, and to be even with you, will be as reserved as yourselves.'

Saying this, she left us; and, as she was oftentimes insupportable, her company was not at all desired.

As soon as we were alone, I acquainted Saint Agnes with my dream: she was surprized, and told me it portended something. 'You will be involved in difficulties,' continued she; 'but happiness attends you at last. Alas! how far different is my unhappy fate! no hope left, nothing but continual afflictions to be expected!' I endeavoured to divert the dear creature, seeing her eyes full of tears; and in order to it made her write down my dream. We both of us frequently employed ourselves in writing our adventures, which served at least to amuse us.

One morning, whilst Saint Agnes and I were reasoning on the unhappy condition of a young woman who falls a sacrifice to the interest or caprice of her parents, De Renneville put a stop to our reflections, by coming to tell us that a young lady, who seemed to be overwhelmed with sorrow, was just arrived. 'You'll find she is some unfortunate victim,' continued De Renneville; 'one may read as much in her very countenance.' Saint Agnes, as well as I, was too much affected with what we had been talking of, to mind the news De Renneville brought us: for my part, I little imagined how deeply I was like to be concerned.

De Renneville, who never staid long in a place, finding we were not disposed to chat with her, presently left us. We resumed our subject, and Saint Agnes, more dispirited than usual, owned very frankly she could bear up no longer against her misfortunes. I took this opportunity to advise her, that if that was the case, it was high time to take some measures for putting an end to them; that something should be ready drawn up, which, when an opportunity offered, should be sent to Monsieur De Melicourt, who had already exerted himself in her behalf. This advice gave her new life: she desired me to write a memorial of what had passed; to this she subjoined a protestation against her vows. A fortunate precaution, as it afterwards proved, though I then little thought of being employed in the affair, or that we were on the point of being separated from each other.

Just as Saint Agnes had made up the packet, the bell rung to go to the refectory.

factory. We made all the haste possible, having been frequently reprimanded for coming too late. I went as usual to the pensioner's table; the young lady De Renneville had mentioned was sitting there: she rose out of civility when I came; but, Heavens! who should I see? Let any one judge of my surprize and astonishment. My heart fell a beating the moment I discovered one I had no reason to be very fond of; in a word, Mademoiselle D'Elbieux.

I turned pale at the rencounter; a general trembling seized me, and I fell back into a chair, every one running to my assistance, nuns and pensioners without exception, as I was much beloved; Mademoiselle D'Elbieux herself, among the rest, not having discovered who I was. The moment she looked me in the face, she recollected herself: 'Good God!' cried she, 'what do I see! it is Jenny! who would have thought it! Ah, it is no wonder my brother breathes his last!' Saying this, she run from me as if she was distracted, crying all the way, that I was a wicked creature, and the occasion of her brother's being assassinated; in fine, she filled the whole house with her tears and lamentations.

But before I proceed, it will not be improper to touch upon the occasion which brought Mademoiselle D'Elbieux to the monastery where I was placed.

A servant belonging to the Chevalier D'Elbieux, who was present at the rencounter, took post, and acquainted the countess with what had happened. Struck with the desperate condition her son was in, she resolved to set out with her daughter in a chaise to come and tend him: but, as misfortune generally follows misfortune, she had no sooner left her own house, but a messenger arrived from Paris, sent express by her husband, who was under confinement on account of a quarrel with a person of quality, directing her to repair instantly to Paris, in order to solicit his discharge. The countess was overwhelmed with this second disaster, divided as she was between her duty to the count and tender regard for her son: in her own inclinations the son would have had the preference; but the imputation of not being upon very good terms with her husband, (and which would have been confirmed on such an urgent occasion) determined her to take the

road for Paris. Mademoiselle D'Elbieux was of the same opinion; but her tenderness for the chevalier made her tell the countess, that he ought not to be abandoned whilst his life was in such imminent danger, and therefore obtained her consent to go to Madame De G——, whither the countess could not possibly carry her, (though she would very gladly have done it) without losing an entire day by going so far out of the road; whereas by her husband's orders she was obliged to reach Paris that night. Whilst these things were settling in such a manner that they might not interfere one with another, the countess bethought herself of having been a pensioner in the monastery where I actually was, and which lying in her road to Paris, was a convenient place to set down her daughter, who from thence might go in another chaise to Madame De G——'s castle, which she knew was but a few miles distant.

The train of misfortunes which pursued me ordered it so, that when the countess arrived, there was no chaise to be had for her daughter: the abbess thought of an expedient, which was, to send a messenger to Madame De G—— for one; and, in the mean time, Mademoiselle D'Elbieux was to stay at the monastery. In such cases, the strangers usually dined in a parlour; but my ill-fated destiny inclined her to dine in the refectory, where we met. There are in life, often effected by mere chance, occurrences so very singular, that one is apt to attribute them to premeditated designs. In reality, nothing could be more extraordinary than what happened to me at this juncture. Though there was nothing surprizing in the count's being confined, every day producing adventures of that nature, yet I could never satisfy myself as to this incident; especially when it so nearly concerned me not to be discovered. But to return to our history.

Mademoiselle D'Elbieux's outcries drew some of the nuns after her to know the occasion. Her resentment against me exerted itself very severely. She gave them my history, (not forgetting what I came from;) setting off every circumstance in the strongest colours malice could possibly invent; and all this before the abbess and several of the nuns. The abbess, piqued at her being imposed on, assured Mademoi-

selle D'Elbieux, that since it was so, she would send me away very shortly.

A chaise being brought the next morning, Mademoiselle D'Elbieux went away. For my part, that day and the following night were spent in the cruellest agitations. The amiable Saint Agnes, terrified at the continual faintings which seized me, employed all the care the tenderest friendship could devise in my behalf. 'Take courage, my dear,' said she, 'you will one day surmount these difficulties, I undertake to foretell; in the mean time, patience and policy must not be wanting: if you suffer yourself to be thus cast down, the whole monastery will believe all the wicked creature has advanced. She exceeds by far the character you gave of her: nevertheless, you have this comfort, you are generally beloved, and consequently she will find very little credit.'—'Ah, my dear friend!' replied I, 'calumny bears a great sway, and easily leaves a mark: but that is not the worst I dread; sooner or later, what she has alledged will be remembered; and when I reflect on the consequences that may naturally follow, I give myself over for lost. When Mademoiselle D'Elbieux arrives at Madame De G——'s, her tears and just resentment will entirely destroy the little interest I have left with my patroness, as every thing makes against me; the letters she formerly wrote, which I have mentioned to you, left too deep an impression in Madame De G——'s mind, to say nothing of what has happened since: her abrupt manner of leaving me, the little notice she takes of me at present, are they not fatal indications that I am not mistaken? Yes,' continued I, bursting into tears, 'and to compleat my misery, I shall perhaps be torn from you: this very monastery, once so hateful, through the friendship with which you are pleased to honour me, is become the dearest object of my wishes.' Saint Agnes plainly shewed by her tears and caresses, how much she was affected with what I said; when a person came to acquaint me, that the abbess called for me. 'Ah!' cried I, 'here begins my new train of misfortunes! I followed the nun who came for me, Saint Agnes making a sign that she would wait for me in her cell. I came

to the abbess's chamber under terrible apprehensions; she was surrounded by several nuns, who talked to her with great vehemency. I no sooner appeared, but a general silence followed. 'Come hither, Miss,' cried the abbess; 'pray inform me, as to be sure you can, what reason Madame De G—— could have for deceiving me, and passing you upon me for her niece?' Had she thought fit to have trusted me with the secret, it might have been of service to you; especially as I am sensible of the obligations I have to that lady, which I am not ashamed to acknowledge, as all here present can witness. In all appearance you are much in favour with her; her adopting a country girl for a niece is certainly a convincing proof. You seem a little confounded; but take courage; you come too well recommended, to have the least reason to apprehend any ill usage from me: nevertheless, tell the truth; for that alone can intitle you to an abode here. Consider, whether you had best interest me in your behalf, or provide for yourself.'

This harangue, from a reverend person, went so far as to draw tears, but gave me no encouragement to speak my mind: as it lasted a considerable while, through her want of breath, I had sufficient time to reflect how I should behave; I concluded not to explain myself till I heard from Madame De G——, who, it was natural to imagine, upon Mademoiselle D'Elbieux's arrival, would come to a resolution, and either send a messenger, or write to me. Upon this I answered, that I knew Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, and the little favour I could expect at her hands; but as to the airs she had been pleased to give herself, and the character she had bestowed on me, it was a mystery I could not pretend to unravel; that I had nothing more to say, but was ready to return, if it should be required. The abbess, surprized to see me so resolute, whispered one of the nuns, and then made a sign for me to retire; which I did, making a low curtesy, and repaired to my cell, where I found Saint Agnes waiting for me in great anxiety.

She was all in tears, and it was my turn to comfort her: the apprehensions that I should be sent away, and the fear of losing so intimate a friend, alarmed her

her cruelly; and, indeed, what can be a greater consolation, than to share our griefs with those who affectionately interest themselves in our behalf? The remaining part of the day was spent in melancholy reflections, and we did not part till very late at night.

Notwithstanding the trouble of mind I lay under, I was on the point of falling asleep, when I heard my door open. I trembled every joint, not being able to divine who could come to me at that hour. 'Are you awake, dear Jenny?' said Saint Agnes, coming up to me. 'Good God!' replied I, 'how you frightened me!'—'I'll lay a wager,' said she smiling, 'you expected somebody else. A lover, for example, at this critical juncture, would have been natural enough; but in our history it would have been a difficult matter, especially as the men of these days are less enterprising than in the ages of knight-errantry.' Saying this, she sat down upon the bed, dressed in her nightcloaths; and, as white became her particularly well, she looked charmingly handsome; I could not forbear complimenting her upon it. 'Alas!' says she, 'how can you mind such things! A convincing proof that we women, though engaged in the most serious affairs, are ever prone to trifles. Would it not have been more natural for you to have asked the reason of my disturbing you at such an unseasonable hour?'—'Good God!' I replied, 'as if I could be disturbed by one that is so dear!—But you seem to have letters in your hand! Have you received any lately?'—'Alas! from whom?' answered Saint Agnes; 'these are what we wrote together: for I was no sooner in bed, but I reflected on all that had passed to-day, and from thence concluded, that in all probability your stay may be short. Imagine the trouble this must necessarily give me. However, a little self-interest interfered: I immediately resolved, lest I should be prevented by your sudden departure, to come and beg, that if I am so unfortunate as to lose you, these letters may be taken care of, as soon as your own affairs will admit.'—'I shall not wait for that,' I replied; 'if, my dear friend, we must part, your business shall have the preference; I know too well, by fatal experience, the torture of incertitude,

to abandon you to it. It was my duty to have prevented you on this occasion: let the vexation I have undergone, plead my excuse; I will make amends hereafter.' Saint Agnes took me in her arms, fully satisfied with what I had promised. We passed great part of the night in talking of our affairs, and taking proper measures that the letters might be safely delivered, and the answers returned. I set down in writing the names of the persons and places; after which, being much fatigued with watching, Saint Agnes retired, and I fell asleep.

I was two days under the greatest uneasiness, without hearing any news; on the third day, Madame De G—— wrote to my superior to put me into the hands of the bearer of her letter: she took no farther notice of any thing, but that she would shortly see her. I happened to be with the superior when the express arrived; she shook her head at this letter, saying, 'This is very mysterious, indeed!—Go your ways, Miss,' said she to me, 'and pack up your things, whilst I return an answer to Madame De G——.' Saint Agnes being then present, would have followed me; but she was ordered to stay where she was; it was apprehended, undoubtedly, lest this nun should take occasion of my departure to give me some commission, but it proved too late; so true it is, that we should not defer business to the last day.

I went to my cell disturbed, as may be imagined, and had soon taken order about my departure; from thence I returned to the lady abbess, to take my leave, which she received with great indifference: it was not so with the rest of the community and pensioners; they each of them embraced me, and gave me marks of their friendship. When it came to Saint Agnes's turn, she fell a crying bitterly: my separation from this dear friend drew tears from me, as I squeezed her hand. Till then, I had not seen the person who came to fetch me away; at last she appeared; and, to my comfort, it was Christina, woman to Madame De G——, who, as I mentioned before, loved me so well. In spite of my trouble I was pleased to see her. 'Ah, dear Christina!' said I to her, getting into the chaise, 'what am I to hear next? Has your lady any regard left for me?'—'I have a great deal

‘to tell you,’ replied the maid, mightily taken with the caresses I bestowed on her; ‘you shall hear it as soon as we can get out of the village. God bless me!’ cried she, ‘how you are changed!’—‘Truly,’ replied I, ‘no great wonder; I have not had a quiet moment since I came to this convent; and distress is no friend to beauty: but what is most extraordinary, if a small matter casts me down, the slightest satisfaction sets me up again.’

As soon as we were got into the open country, I reminded Christina of her promise. ‘Alas!’ replied she, ‘I wish I had nothing to tell you; but I love you too well, dear Jenny, to hide any thing from you. I’ll lay a wager you can’t guess on whose account you are taken from this monastery.’—‘Madame De G——’s?’ replied I: ‘Miss D’Elbieux’s?’—‘No,’ says she; ‘the chevalier himself, who now lies at the point of death, touched with a sense of all the misfortunes he has brought on you, desires to see you, with tears in his eyes; and knowing the aversion his sister has for you, he made her promise to receive you kindly. This young lady at first was outrageous against you; Madame De G—— was afraid to speak in your behalf, so much was she transported with passion: however, she seems something appeased ever since her brother has declared his intentions to her; though it is easily perceived, she only hides the rancour of her mind.’—‘I know her,’ replied I, ‘and will take care of her. But what do they say besides? What will they do with me? Why am I sent for? What has happened in my absence?’—‘You may easily imagine the marquis has not forgot you,’ said Christina, looking steadfastly on me; ‘and you will be glad to hear something of him; however, that is what I am forbid positively; but that would be too cruel: as I know your discretion, I will proceed to give you the satisfaction you desire.’

‘That very day that Madame De G—— came back from the monastery you have just now quitted, she received a letter from the marquis, who desired, in the most tender and respectful manner, to hear how you did; adding, that he hoped in time to make her his acknowledgments for the protection

she was pleased to grant you. The valet de chambre, who had orders from his master to see you, and perhaps to deliver you some letters, had but just time to receive his answer from my lady before he returned, because of her apprehensions lest the marquis should not be made sensible enough, that the affair was much talked of, having all the reason in the world to dread the valet’s being seized every moment.

‘These fears of Madame De G—— were but too true; that very night at twelve there came an exempt, bearing *lettres de cachet*, to arrest the marquis, the Chevalier D’Elbieux, you my dear child; and all those who had any concern in this unlucky affair. The castle and the village underwent the strictest scrutiny imaginable; they rummaged the most private places, so confident was the exempt of finding what he sought for. He would have taken away the Chevalier De Elbieux; but, on the attestations of the physicians and surgeons, that removing him might cost him his life, he drew up a verbal process, left him in custody of proper officers, and returned to give an account of his proceedings. Monsieur De G—— set out at the same time, and having made interest by his friends, and given satisfaction to the families concerned, the affair took a favourable turn; and the officers were remanded. But though the marquis be connived at by a particular favour, as well as the chevalier, notwithstanding the first of these is commanded not to appear again till farther orders, yet all this will not screen you: the court being informed that you are the cause of this duel, has ordered you to be arrested and confined.’—‘Ah, my God!’ cried I, ‘I am lost! It is to secure me, then, that I am brought from the monastery!’—‘No,’ continued Christina; ‘fear nothing; the search is over, and they imagine you are at a greater distance. While you are with my lady, you may be easy: I won’t tell you her design; you shall know it from her own mouth.’—‘All that I can tell you for certain is, that I have heard my lady say, but for your lover’s father, your name would not have been brought in question in all this affair: he even insisted you should be arrested. Alarmed at your

your escape, and suspecting Madame De G—— of being your friend, he wrote her a thundering letter about you, wherein he complains bitterly that she was the cause, by protecting you, of the rencounter which endangered his son's life. He peremptorily demands that you be admitted a nun.

—'And, Madam,' cried I, hastily interrupting her, 'what says she?'—'I don't know,' continued Christina, 'she has not communicated her thoughts to me on that subject; but there is no danger of her leaving you, she loves you too well. If you did but know how earnestly she recommended to me to draw up the glasses of the chaise, and to hide you when any one came by, you would be quite easy; her great regard should satisfy and convince you, that without a tender concern, she could never be so solicitous about such trifles.'

Christina said a great deal more to encourage me, but in vain. I gave myself up to grief, and regretted a thousand times my native village. 'Where is my father, mother, sister, and relations? Alas! how happy were my days when I dwelt in the peaceful cottage; though my pleasures were but simple, my cares were inconceivable. Shall I never live to see that blessed time again!'

At last we arrived at the village. Christina sat on my lap as we came in, and took all possible precautions to hide me. The postilion, who had his orders, set us down in the inner court of the castle; from thence they conducted me into the lady's closet: word was sent her of my arrival; whilst I waited for her, such a palpitation of the heart, and oppression of spirits, seized me, as is not to be expressed.

'You are come, then, my poor Jenny,' said this lady to me as she entered, raising me up; 'in truth your lot is very unfortunate: I wish, with all my heart, I had never known you. You are a good girl, and have not deserved, nor brought upon yourself, these unhappy adventures; but you are not less miserable: I am extremely perplexed to know what to do with you. Christina has told you, without doubt, all that has passed, and how pressing Monsieur Le Marquis de L. V. is with me to have you delivered into his hands. I do not know which

way to determine. Monsieur De G——, on the other hand, wishes I would surrender you to that nobleman, who engages his word, as he writes to me, that not only no harm shall come to you, but that he will give positive orders to treat you gently. Notwithstanding his promises, my friendship for you witholds me. What is best to be done?'—'Ah, Madam,' cried I, falling at her feet, 'pity your poor Jenny: if you abandon me, I must die in despair! Admit I were to depend on the word of the marquis, notwithstanding the reasons he has to be dissatisfied with me, have not I great room to dread fresh adventures? You know his son, and what he is capable of doing. No sooner will he know the place where his father hath confined me, but he will move heaven and earth to see me or steal me away. Ah, Madam, save me from these new disasters! I do conjure you, abandon me first to my evil fate, and permit me to retire: even this very night, I will hide myself from the world. Happy should I be, could I but forget myself!'

'We will think of it,' says Madame De G——, musing in the mean time. 'Stay here, I will step to the Chevalier D'Elbieux, and know if he is disposed to see you; he has done nothing these twenty-four hours but call for you; his sister, of whom Christina has undoubtedly spoke to you, did her utmost to restrain him from that eagerness; her opposition had like to have proved fatal to him; he was taken with a fainting-fit, and Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, who loves him tenderly, grieved to have been the cause of it, asked his pardon with tears in her eyes, and promised him that for his sake she would be your friend, and that she would receive you kindly. The unfortunate chevalier seeing this alteration, embraced her, saying, that all the world should be satisfied as soon as he had spoke to you. He sent for a notary, who, as they say, has drawn up his will. The poor young man is very ill; and the surgeon affirms he can never get the better of it without a miracle, his fever having no intermission. Adieu, Jenny,' says Madame De G——, as she was going away, 'you shall hear from me presently; be easy, who knows but God may have pity on you!'

Madame

Madame De G—— was scarce gone out of the closet, when Miss D'Elbieux appeared with a candle in her hand. She grew pale at the sight of me. I believe I did not yield to her in that respect. However, she was more courageous than I, and advanced first. My legs failed under me through a general tremor which seized me. 'Can you forgive, my dear Jenny,' says this young lady, embracing me, 'all the trouble I have caused you; you have too much sense to wish me any harm for it; the fears I was always under for what has now come to pass, occasioned my dislike, but the condition my brother is now in, together with his intreaties, has extinguished it: come, then; your presence may perhaps contribute to his recovery. Alas! I much fear they dissemble the danger he is really in of losing his life.' I answered only with my tears, Mademoiselle D'Elbieux's behaviour moving me to compassion. Candour is always liable to be imposed on by appearances. I followed her to her brother's apartment, where she was no sooner arrived, but she cried out, 'Here is my friend, Jenny! pray God the sight of her may restore you to me!' A faint voice replied, 'Where is she? Let me see her,' continued the chevalier, 'and I die content.' Drawing near him, not without some apprehension, he stretched out his hand to mine. The agonizing voice, and death in his countenance, affected me very much.

'I no longer regret any thing in this life,' cried he, 'since I see you once more. Jenny, can you forgive me all the vexations I have caused you? Will my death be sufficient to atone for them?—O Heaven, convince this girl of my remorse for my criminal passion towards her! If I could but live to make you a witness of God's grace in my regard, by shewing the horror I have for presuming to assault your innocence! Instead of that frantick love, receive now the assurance of a most sincere and tender friendship. Whether I live or die, I shall never alter. Present my service to the marquis, whenever you see him, and assure him that I repent of having given him so much uneasiness; I will make amends for it, by what I shall do for you. Do you rightly understand me, Jenny?' cried he, which he re-

peated twice over. 'Do you promise,' continued he, 'to pray to God to pardon me? Your innocence will obtain mercy for me.' Pronouncing these words, he lifted up his eyes, and prayed most devoutly; then turning to his valet de chambre, called for what he had bid him lock up. The chevalier receiving a small packet sealed, presented me with it. 'This,' says he, 'is the least I could do for you; it is a bond for twenty thousand livres, left by an uncle, and consequently cannot injure my family: Miss D'Elbieux has been acquainted with it, and not only thinks it proper, but has even promised to love you and make an addition to it. Is not that true, dear sister,' cried he, stretching forth his hand. 'Your love for me is too great to be indifferent to my memory.'

The poor chevalier, who forced tears from all about him, seemed to shew a glimpse of joy at the kiss his sister gave me, in compliance with what he said. He concluded by saying, 'I am satisfied; this is all I desired of Heaven. In order to shew my gratitude, I now turn all my thoughts to the meditation of God's mercy.' Saying this, he took my hand, and squeezed it, weak as he was; then he embraced his sister who was bathed in tears, and his confessor was brought in, after he had first returned thanks to Madame De G—— for all her kindness, and made an obliging sign of respect to all that were present.

We were eight days in suspense for the Chevalier D'Elbieux's life; sometimes there were hopes, sometimes he was given over. On the ninth day, the surgeon declared, that if the fever left him, he was out of danger; and at night it did so. This news was received with joy, in which I shared with every body else on the occasion. Miss D'Elbieux, changed as much as possible in my regard, professed a great friendship for me, and declared publicly, that if her brother recovered this time, she should be obliged to me alone, after God, for it. I answered these civilities with all the affection possible. Who would have thought she deceived me, and that she was forming designs against me, the blackest you can imagine between the most mortal enemies!

The Chevalier D'Elbieux, who had obtained new life and health, resumed
also

also the sentiments of honour and probity. He shewed himself entirely free from the passion he had conceived for me; but there hung on him a deep melancholy, and he seemed full of some important design. I could not help being secretly struck at this serious air of his, and began again to fear lest he was meditating some new enterprize. Where by experience we have reason to mistrust, we are apt to misconstrue every thing: however, I was mistaken; far different and important cares took up the Chevalier D'Elbieux's thoughts. Who would have imagined it! Great God, how ought we to revere thy decrees! One morning Madame de G—— sent for me to her room; she had a letter in her hand, and tears in her eyes. The sight struck me. 'More ill news,' cried I. 'No, my dear child,' answered this amiable lady: 'read, and you will know whether I have reason to be moved, and whether you could have foreseen any more than I such an event.' I took the letter and read as follows.

A LETTER FROM THE CHEVALIER D'ELBIEUX TO MADAME DE G——.

PARDON me, Madam, if I went away without most humbly taking my leave of you, and acknowledging the favours with which you honoured me during my stay at your house. I write to my sister to perform these obligations for me, my sense of which no words can express. If ever I obtain mercy in the sight of God, you shall not be forgot in my prayers.

Knowing, through fatal experience, this life to be subject to nothing but passions and disappointments; and fully convinced that the things of most importance, to which we sacrifice all that is dear to us, are in the sight of God but trifles, often hurtful to salvation; that we must all die, and one day render an account of all our actions; frightened at my disorderly life, and fearing that, if I entered again into the world, I might relapse into my former dangerous habits, I have taken a resolution of quitting it, and retiring amongst the Capuchins, where I shall be out of the occasions of sin. I have long resisted the inward impulses of a celestial vocation

to quit the world; God has at length been so gracious to determine me, by shewing to me the gaping jaws of death, and only preserving me from it, that I might have time to recollect myself, and to atone for my sins. Excited by this mercy, I fly where he calls, and avoid every thing that may shake my resolution. I recommend to my sister the innocent object of my past follies, that she may prevail on Jenny to forget all the vexations I have occasioned. I take you to be that good and generous person who will, I flatter myself, assist her in it. I am, Madam, with respect, your, &c.

THE CHEVALIER D'ELBIEUX.

This letter made as great an impression on me as on Madame De G——, forcing tears from me. That instant entered Miss D'Elbieux like a mad woman, and seeing me, said the most disagreeable things on the subject of her brother's retiring, crying out I was the cause of all the misfortunes of her family; but that she would be revenged. Madame De G—— checked her, by recalling to her mind her brother's intentions. These moving remonstrances softened this young lady; she reflected a while, then came and embraced me, and asked my pardon, excusing her violence by the loss of a brother whom she adored. I received these excuses with respect, and answered in the civilest manner. Candour takes all the world to be like itself, estranged as it is from the arts of dissimulation. Not long after, I learned by experience, that when a woman has once taken an aversion to a person, she rarely changes her mind.

Miss D'Elbieux was the first to desire Madame De G—— to keep me at her house till I should determine how to dispose of myself. That lady, as well as myself, not suspecting her black designs, placed an entire confidence in the friendship with which this lady seemed to honour us. She left us two days after to join her mother, who wrote to acquaint her with the enlargement of the Count D'Elbieux, and to rejoice with her on the chevalier's recovery, of whose retreat they had not yet heard. Miss D'Elbieux gave the tenderest marks of her esteem as she got into her chaise, embraced me most affectionately: this was the last kiss I received from her; it was the

the forerunner of the blow she was going to strike.

Two days after her departure Madame De G—— received a letter from her, in which I was not forgot, but earnestly recommended: this new kindness effaced all remembrance of her former proceedings.

I received the next morning much more acceptable letters; Dubois was the bearer; it was one continued series of the warmest sentiments: that faithful lover, the marquis, acquainted me that he was then in Lorraine; that he missed being taken only by two days; that they gave him hopes of returning shortly to Paris, but this news was no otherwise agreeable to him, than as he expected to see me there; after this he communicated to me a letter of his father's, wherein he engages him to take a tour into Germany, in order to forget, as he termed it, his late adventures. There was not any sort of mention made of me, which disturbed my lover, as he observed to me, considering his father's character, of whom he had a great mistrust. He entreated me to give him a full detail of my present situation, desiring me at the same time not to afflict myself, and that not only my interest but my tranquillity should be the constant object of all his care and attention.

These were joyful tidings to me, and a cessation of my troubles ensued. It is natural for those who are accustomed to affliction to seize the first interval, and smallest glimpse of hope, to solace themselves, moved by the repugnance the weakness of human nature has to suffering. I wrote the marquis a long letter, and told him every thing that had happened to me. Dubois assured me he would have my letter in two days, and that he expected it with the utmost impatience, tired to death, although they used their endeavours in the town where he was to amuse him agreeably. A secret inquietude, which got the better of me, made me question the valet de chambre upon what he had let drop: he told me the town where the marquis resided was full of beautiful women, a great number of whom thought the marquis a pretty gentleman. I cannot rightly say if it was jealousy, or too much niceness; I certainly had a mind Dubois should describe these handsome Lorrainers, whose beauty he had extolled. I made him sit down while I

was at my toilette, and he gave me the following account.

'They call the town,' says he, 'where we are at present, Pont à Mousson, situated in a delightful country, and where, as is usual in most other towns, there is no regret for the pleasures of Paris; the quality are extremely polite, and the town's people mighty affable. The easy behaviour of the women and their appearance is as genteel as at Paris. Amongst those who distinguish themselves by their beauty and carriage, I will name you Madame De Gombervault: she has light-coloured hair, and is extremely fair, with a sweetness of temper exceedingly captivating. Her husband is captain of his royal highness's guards, and acquits himself well in doing the honours of his house. The marquis has dined there as well as at Madame La Baronne D'Atel, a brown beauty of lively and elevated parts. Her husband is chamberlain to the prince, who unites a great share of probity with an inclination he has of obliging all foreigners of distinction who arrive in that town. He is extremely curious in his books, and the marquis has all the reason in the world to be satisfied with this gentleman's behaviour. The third family, where he is also perfectly well received, is that of Madame La Presidente de Landres: this is a very amiable lady, and spends her estate very elegantly and cheerfully; she is always one of the first to promote pleasure and mirth. Her husband, President of Vitry le François, is one of the most accomplished gentlemen I know.

'They are very agreeable people at the provost's of the town; his wife is fond of dancing, for which reason there are frequent balls at her house. She has two very handsome daughters; the eldest is married to an exempt of the guards, whose name is Saint Val, a great musician, and a perfect master of the viol: there is but one thing laid to his charge, that is, he is jealous; but he is to be forgiven for it, because his wife is of a turn to inspire love. As the marquis is frequently at his house, on account of the musick, of which he is passionately fond, people take it into their heads he has a fancy for the young wife.'

Dubois was going on, when I interrupted

rupted him: a sudden uneasiness seized me, and I thought he concealed something. 'You pass very slightly,' said I, 'over Madame De Saint Val; tell me sincerely, if your master, to pass away the time, never makes love to her?'—'Ah! ah!' cried Dubois smiling, 'I believe Miss, God forgive me, you are jealous.'—'Who, I! not at all,' said I blushing; 'it would very ill become me, nor do I presume to controul the marquis.' I pronounced these words with tears in my eyes, quickly turning myself away. Dubois, who perceived it, and was very much devoted to me, knowing the secret intentions of his master, and how much it would displease him should he give me the least disquiet, eased me of my alarms, which I had not power to hide from him, by giving me an exact detail of the life his master led. As he saw this appeased me, he resumed his discourse, and told me a number of pretty adventures that had happened at Pont à Mousson; which may find a place perhaps in the course of these Memoirs:

We were in one of the most pleasant of them, caused by jealousy, at which I was laughing very heartily; when Madame De G— came and interrupted us: she gave Dubois a letter for his master, who waited for nothing but his dispatch: He took leave of us, and went away post.

I felt a vast consolation in having wrote to the marquis; it was the first letter he received from me wherein the sentiments of my heart were clearly expressed. Nothing gives greater relief than the unboresome one's self, especially when one is not so much confined to the forms of decorum and modesty. I never should have been able to have said so much by word of mouth, as I ventured to do by my pen. He has since owned to me, my letter overwhelmed him with joy. I imagine, from my own experience, when love is built on esteem and virtue, that the sweets it affords surpass a hundred times those that arise from a hurry of the passions; at least I have heard so from those who have known both. But to return. Every body has his taste, and I think that ought not to be disputed.

In the mean time, as I grew up, my reason augmented with my years; this furnished me with a steadiness which supported me against the dreadful ap-

prehensions of what was to come. Madame De G—, who had a great deal of wit and knowledge of the world, gave a polite turn to my education: the sincere attachment she perceived I had to her, so prepossessed her in my favour, that she would pass whole days in my company. These frequent conversations had cleared up my understanding: without living in the world, I had learned all its ways from the various histories she had placed before my eyes, and the daily transactions that passed. When I was alone, I examined with care all that had been said, and had penetration enough to draw this conclusion in general, that each season of our lives draws after it its necessary dependencies; from hence I was persuaded, that in a succession of things life passes away, and that present evils are to be supported by the consideration that they either give way to, or are relieved by fresh events that make us forget the past: in fine; upon these principles I drove on the time, if I may be allowed the expression, in hopes that sooner or later I should accomplish what I desired; and this end, this point, I will own it without a blush, was to see myself one day united to my lover.

I will not venture to say, that people have a prescience of what is to happen to them: as a woman, it is not allowed me to discuss the point, nor would my sentiment be of any weight; all I know for certain is, that having staid pretty late one night with Madame De G—, I went to my chamber extremely uneasy, which was not usual; I had all the difficulty imaginable in going to bed, though this was scarce ever the case. Not knowing how to account for my want of sleep, I began to read the marquis's letters, hoping that might soothe me; but whether that they brought my afflictions fresh to my memory, or that the style of a lover is no promoter to sleep in young people, I was not able to close my eyes: however, I put out my candle, and went to bed. The crowing of the cocks, who proclaimed the approach of day, made me wish for some rest; but, vain attempt! it was to no purpose to shut my eyes, or change my posture; I was no sooner settled on one side, but I tossed to the other: these perpetual agitations tormented me to that degree, that I resolved to rise and light my candle; in short, I was just getting up, when

M

I heard

I heard a knock at my door. I started up through fright; it was then but dawn of day, and they were never used to disturb me at that hour. My door was strongly bolted; for ever since the design of taking me away, I was very exact in these precautions: however, they redoubled their blows. I asked in a fearful voice what they wanted; it was Madame De G—— that answered, and bid me open the door, but in such a tone that chilled my blood: I thought she was not alone, and that a man was talking with her. I snatched up my gown in my arms, and the door being opened, I saw a gentleman enter, accompanied by Madame De G——: his mouth was opened to speak; but after having fixed his eyes on me, he turned them towards my protectress. 'Truly, Madam,' cried he, 'I did not think to disturb so pretty a lady; I am no longer surprized at the apprehensions Monsieur Le Marquis De L. V. is under: the cunning and intrigue of this lovely girl may chance to cost his son many a jaunt.' During this discourse, Madame De G—— had flung herself upon my bed, where I lay in a terrible fright. 'Ah, Jenny! how unhappy am I,' said she to me, 'to have known you now, and to lose you so soon!' This discourse overwhelmed my agonizing soul. 'Just Heaven!' cried I, in tears, 'what is it you say to me, Madam?' 'Ah! I will never leave you, I will sooner die!' and threw myself into her arms. The stranger, drawing near in a polite manner; 'I am mortified,' my charming young lady, said he, 'to give you this trouble; and much more for the orders I have for an arrest. You will find, nevertheless, with the help of that understanding this lady says you possess, and of which I make no doubt, some reason not to be dejected. Monsieur Le Marquis, on obtaining a *lettre de catchet* to put you into a monastery, ought to have made use of those persons who are appointed for that purpose; but he intrusted me with his design and his motives: a secret inclination made me desire this commission, more out of curiosity, I own to you, than any design of displeasing you. I will add a third motive, and I will not dissimble before this lady, being thoroughly convinced, from the friendship she professes for you, that she may be

trusted: I am a friend and humble servant of my cousin, your lover. Notwithstanding his reserve, and his want of confidence in me, I knew the whole affair as soon as it broke out; and as I understood the intentions of the marquis his father, pretended to approve them, to be able the better to manage his resentment. So that, Miss, you will have nothing to fear: all the hurt you will have, is to be separated from Madame De G——; and much happier days will obliterate the remembrance of the present. I must confess, your tears and condition greatly move me; and I would not for the world have entered so far into this affair.'

Monsieur De Saint Fal (that was the stranger's name) sighed when he spoke these words. Madame De G—— endeavoured, from the concern he shewed, to engage him to return without me; and to say, for his excuse, that I had made my escape two days before his arrival. 'It is not practicable, Madam,' replied he; 'my uncle knows perfectly well that Miss is here at your house: a person you know, whom I must not name, has a spy in pay here at this time; who, in case Mademoiselle had gone from your house, was to have followed her, and informed where she went.—You see, ladies, I speak sincerely; you cannot be long in judging from whence the blow comes.—' 'Ah, the wicked creature!' cried I, 'it is the false Miss D'Elbieux, who caressed me at the time she was contriving my ruin. Madame de G——, who was not so nearly concerned as I, had no suspicion of her. Upon what I said she turned her eyes towards M. De Saint Fal; one glance of his convinced her of the mischievousness of this wretch. Shrugging up her shoulders, she took me in her arms, protesting she never would abandon me. 'I cannot oppose the king's orders,' said she; 'nothing less should tear you from my arms. The letter your lover's father writes is filled with apologies, for the violence which he is obliged to use, to prevent, he says, fatal consequences: it is in consideration to me,' continued she, 'that he has sent his nephew, instead of an exempt, knowing, says he, how much I esteem you. On this account, he assures me you shall be treated with the utmost tenderness. Wherefore, my dear girl, take

'take courage, submit to necessity, and behave yourself always with prudence; God will bless you, and will make you triumph over fortune, and all these unlucky accidents!' She made a sign to Monsieur De Saint Fal to retire for a moment. And this charming lady, to animate me, took the most effectual way, by telling me that it was on the like occasions I ought to manifest myself worthy of the sentiments the marquis had for me, and shew an elevation of mind above my birth, which would reflect a confusion on Nature and Fortune, for having been mistaken in bringing me into the world: 'besides, Jenny, consider, the more you suffer the more you will endear yourself to your lover. I say no more; you understand me: we must wait God's pleasure to accomplish the rest.'

This exhortation made an impression; I found it conformable to what passed in my own breast. 'Yes,' says I, getting up and preparing to depart; 'the marquis shall acknowledge this sacrifice I make him.' I stifled my tears, and immediately resumed a serene countenance. I appeared quite another person to Monsieur De Saint Fal, who entered a moment after: he was surprized and charmed to see it. I behaved with all the civilities his age and rank required, acquainting him, I was ready to obey the orders he bore; beseeching him to assure M. Le Marquis at his return, that I had a respect for every thing that came from him, his severity not excepted. M. De Saint Fal several times applauded my good sense and resolution. When all was ready, I embraced my much loved protectress with the greatest fondness: it was in vain to pretend to refrain; this farewell was attended with my tears, and I had the same proofs of her sincerity. In giving me the last adieu, she slid her purse into my hand, without the count's perceiving it. As I was getting into the chaise, poor Christina broke out into loud lamentations.

While we were on the road, which was two days longer than necessary, for a reason I shall mention hereafter, M. De Saint Fal behaved with as much respect and complaisance as if I had been a person of the greatest quality. I must except, indeed, the first day, which seemed no very favourable omen of what was to come. They had represented me to him in such a malicious light, that he

concluded, as I had no education, he should have an easy conquest, and from thence assumed a very familiar air; but was much surprized to find himself taken up with a resolution and politeness he little expected. In order to intimidate me, he set out with making me sensible of the power with which he was vested, and the great distance Fortune had put between us. Under a pretence of giving advice to prevent my being miserable the rest of my days, he counselled me, as a friend, to abate something of my haughtiness, and suit my behaviour to my rank; the most natural method, as he frankly owned, I could possibly take. To make this notable harangue the more pathetick, my charms, and the effect they had on him, were not forgot; to say nothing of those familiar appellations of *Dear child, pretty girl, &c.* he added, how great a pity it would be, for one so handsome and genteel to be buried alive; hinting, from time to time, that no favour was to be expected from the old marquis, who, as St. Fal confessed, was much incensed against me; and, consequently, if I was once secured in the place his orders directed, I must bid an eternal adieu to the pleasures of life; for that, either by fair or other means, I should be compelled to become a nun. From threats, he made an artful transition to motives of a more alluring nature, inviting me to accept of and comply with his passion: and as he supposed I could not refuse him, he assured me, that not only he would secure me from falling into the hands of the old marquis, but even make me perfectly happy.

Without vouchsafing any answer to such proposals, I only desired, with an air which put him out of countenance, that he would not trouble me with any more discourse of such a nature, but content himself with executing the commission he had undertaken; for that he might be assured, neither the misfortunes with which I was threatened, nor the deluding baits set before me, should ever prevail upon me to deviate from the plan I had laid down, of a steady adherence to the principles of virtue and honour. The count rallied me upon the oddness of my behaviour, as he was pleased to term it; displayed, though to no purpose, a more modish system of morality; and several times seemed inclined to be very free with me.

I had the address, in a polite manner, to defeat his attacks, and make him sensible how unworthy a part he acted for a well-bred man, in endeavouring, by the power and authority chance had put into his hands, to seduce a young creature, left without any defence but what her tears and weakness could afford. I made it a point wherein worth and honour were highly interested, and touched him nicely concerning the rank and behaviour of a man of quality. In fine, virtue supplied me with so much eloquence on the occasion, that this young nobleman, dangerous as he was, and who that very evening could not prevail on himself to leave my bed-chamber, at last retired covered with confusion, for having drawn upon himself so many remonstrances, the solidity of which he could not but acknowledge; begging of me to forget the vexation he had occasioned, for which he promised to make an ample satisfaction by a far different conduct for the future. I accepted of his excuses in a proper manner, and went to bed cruelly disturbed, as well with what had happened, as what was still to come.

The next day Saint Fal changed his battery: quite another man; behaving with all the politeness imaginable, in which I thought proper not to be behind-hand. He took up several amusing subjects, to divert me, as he said, on my journey. His conversation was easy, and plainly shewed he had seen a great deal of the world, and did not want wit. He was surprized to find I had some share of it myself, looking upon me in the main as a mere country girl: but he ought to have known, that nothing is more apt to take a right turn, than a young person who has the happiness to fall into proper hands. Besides, my misfortunes had enlightened my understanding, and taught me to make proper reflections: to say nothing of the friendship with which Madame De G—— had honoured me; a lady of noble sentiments, and exceedingly well bred, and who had taken a pleasure in forming me. So that I entirely possessed myself, whatever was the subject of the conversation. A thorough knowledge of the world, it is true, can only be acquired by experience; but where there is a tolerable capacity, and a desire of being instructed, in a little time a considerable progress may be made.

Part of the third day passed without a word from the count: he viewed me frequently with a kind of satisfaction, which often ended with a sigh: this behaviour very much alarmed me, lest he should fall in love, and prove another Chevalier D'Elbieux. I turned pale at the very thought, alone as I was, no friend near, and abandoned by the whole world. Sometimes I had thoughts of endeavouring to make my escape. But whither should I go? What part of the country was I in? A powerful family, in whose hands I was, violently incensed against me; besides, with shame I own it, I no longer had the courage I was formerly possessed of; I was grown weak and tender by being bred a fine lady, and had lost that roughness which boldly faces any danger; a thousand apprehensions concurred to alarm me, and made such an impression, that the count plainly perceived it. 'Have you a mind to stop, Jenny?' said the count; 'by your countenance I am afraid you are ill. Does the journey fatigue you too much? You seem buried in thought, and under some uneasiness: I hope you do not remember what passed when I had the misfortune to incur your displeasure. Let me intreat it as a favour, that you deal sincerely with one who is ready to do every thing that can possibly contribute to make you easy, and will seek all occasions of making amends for the affronts he offered, led into a mistake by an unjust prejudice, which the knowledge of your distinguished merit has entirely banished.'

This apology, the cruel reflections which then perplexed me, the apprehension of what was to come, the new convent, indeed, with which I was threatened, all put together, melted me into tears. 'This is too much,' cried the Count De Saint Fal, moved at my condition: 'your grief overwhelms me; I cannot bear it any longer! Notwithstanding a thousand reasons for the contrary, a prevailing motive attacks me. Miss, to your interest; so far even as not to comply with the injunctions which first brought us acquainted. I cannot be so void of compassion as to execute my commission, which, from what I said the other day, I easily guess has given you this disturbance: but make yourself easy; whatever may be expected from me, I can—'

I cannot bear to do any thing which forces tears from the finest eyes I ever beheld. You shall be convinced how great an effect your charms have on all those who approach you: do not blush at the acknowledgment I make, it pleads an excuse for my cousin's passion, whose happiness I envy, and profess myself his rival; but be assured, I will not in the least employ the opportunity Fortune has put into my hands, either to diminish your inclinations for the marquis, much less to constrain you to make any return for the vivacity of those sentiments with which you have inspired me. You sigh, continued the count, taking me by the hand; 'do you doubt of my sincerity? Put it immediately to a trial, and you will know how far I am to be depended upon.' Saint Fal stopped here, and seemed to expect my answer. Whatever reason he gave me to believe he had an inclination for me, I was equally alarmed, and the more discretion it seemed accompanied with, I looked upon it the more dangerous. I knew not what to say, and my eyes, fixed on the ground, discovered my perplexity. 'What means this silence, Miss?' continued Saint Fal; 'is it a mark of your distrust? Do you think me capable of imposing upon you? If these are your sentiments, I plainly see I must now pay for the indifference in which I have hitherto lived, and shall severely repent the rashness I have been guilty of, in thus exposing my liberty. Ought I not to have foreseen this, and have concluded from my cousin's passion, to whose delicacy in affairs of this nature I am no stranger, that you were certainly a very accomplished person? Nevertheless, whatever injustice you may shew in my regard, or treatment I may receive at your hands, I must not regret my having undertaken this commission, since it furnishes me with an opportunity of serving you. You shall know very shortly, continued he, pretty Jenny, that to say and to do is the same thing with me.' Saying this, the count put his head out of the chaise, and ordered one of the servants who rode by, to direct the postilion to take the first road that led to Versailles. The servant, surprized at this, replied, that Monsieur Le Marquis's orders were directly contrary,

and that— 'Do as you are bid,' cried the count, interrupting him, 'and leave the rest to me.' Accordingly the servant retired, and we soon struck out of the great road.

This counter-order surprized me; but, to speak the truth, gave me no manner of uneasiness: the place he mentioned, I knew to be the king's residence, which naturally recalled the dear remembrance, so interesting and so remarkable, of my meeting his majesty at Fontainebleau, the accident which afforded me the first knowledge of my lover. Affected with these ideas, my imagination dispatched a great deal in a little time, uniting several things with much vivacity. The place where I was going was to be the abode of the marquis, and thither he might very possibly soon return. These endearing reflections quickly dispelled the lowering clouds my present situation had gathered. How easily do lovers revive! The heart catches eagerly at the most remote hopes that have any connection with the object beloved. The count was too quick-sighted not to discover this alteration, but was far from attributing it to the true cause. He imagined it was only owing to his promise of not confining me in a monastery. Upon this he repeated it, and added, I should be entirely my own mistress, and be convinced by experience, that though he should not be so happy as to gain my esteem, he would at least merit it by his services and complaisance.

I was on the point of returning a polite answer to these fresh assurances of his favourable disposition in my regard, when entering the village where we were to dine, we saw a crowd of people gathered about a young female pilgrim, carrying, or rather dragging, an enormous cross. 'Good God!' cried I, 'how I pity that young creature, and commiserate her unhappy condition! Cannot you inform me,' said I to the landlady, as I was getting out of the chaise, 'what can be the strict obligation this pilgrim must be under to travel thus?'— 'It is what nobody can account for,' replied the person I spoke to: 'all I know of the matter is, that several of the inhabitants having given her charity, she immediately distributed it to the poor about her, which occasioned the acclamations you still hear, and shews she is no ordinary person. My husband had the same curiosity,

‘curiosity, Miss, as you have, and endeavoured to discover the mystery; but all the account he brought was, that she said she was doing penance, and performing a vow; that if she should suffer a great deal more, it would not be a sufficient atonement for her sins; and before she left the village, we should be acquainted with her history.’

All this only served to increase my curiosity, as I told the Count De Saint Fal; and I went in much dissatisfied at not being able to learn any thing farther.

Being left alone in the room where the cloth was laid, I imagined the count was gone to the stable, according to his custom. Drawing near the fire, I found my vexation (which now could be no novelty) redoubling upon me. ‘If dear Saint Agnes were but with me,’ said I to myself, ‘I could talk over all my misfortunes! Certainly, nothing can be more insupportable, than on some occasions to be abandoned to one’s self.’

Nevertheless, the calling of Saint Agnes to mind, occasioned a reproach to myself, for being so slow in serving her. It is true, from the time I parted from her, I had been so narrowly watched on all occasions by Mademoiselle D’Elbieux, (as Christina informed me) that I had not the least opportunity of acquitting myself of the service I owed my friend. I might, indeed, have left her letters and directions with Christina at my coming away; but, as it was of the greatest consequence not to hazard their being lost, and that the whole affair should be vigorously pursued, I made a scruple of intrusting the commission into the hands of one, who, if occasion required, could not act but in subordination to another. Such were the motives which hitherto tied up my hands; but as we are never so sensible of other people’s misfortunes, as when we sink under the weight of our own, so these few reflections placed in such a strong light Saint Agnes’s grief for my absence, and what tedious hours expectation necessarily counts, that I resolved, cost what it would, to perform my promise, and send by the first opportunity which offered, an express, to deliver her letters into her lover’s own hand; or, in his absence, to his father. The thing seemed the more feasible, by reason of

the money Madame De G—— had given me, and which I had quite forgot, till this design of serving Saint Agnes reminded me of it. I had a curiosity to see what my generous protectress had done for me, and found it amounted to twenty-five louis-d’ors: but how was I transported in opening a little box, to find Madame De G——’s picture! I hugged it to me; and at this moment, whilst I am writing these Memoirs, my heart is moved at the remembrance of what then passed. ‘Yes, generous lady! I will be ever mindful of your goodness, and the friendship with which you honoured me: the loss I have of you is always fresh in my memory; and if any thing is wanting to compleat my happiness, it is the being for ever deprived of you!’ It is generally said, that women seldom bear an entire friendship to one another; but I am an exception from this rule, and though I should live to be extremely old, the memory of Madame De G—— will be ever dear.

The picture I mentioned, was still in my hand, with my eyes and heart fixed on it, when I was surprized by the count leading in the pilgrim. ‘Here, Miss,’ said he, ‘is the lovely person whose condition excited your compassion and curiosity; I have engaged her to take up her quarters here, and she has promised me to relate her story to you. It happens very luckily, that this young gentlewoman knows my name, being related to an intimate acquaintance of my mother’s. I am no stranger to the adventures of this pretty creature; they have been much talked of in my country, though in a manner, as she informs me, very different from the truth.’

I had rose from my seat when the beautiful pilgrim entered the room, and had embraced her very tenderly; but what the count related redoubled my civilities to her, which she returned in a polite manner, becoming a well-bred person. When dinner-time came, she was about to retire; but I press’d her so earnestly to dine with us, that she consented to it, on condition of being left entirely to her own management in point of eating. At the same time, she begged leave to step to the kitchen, and I took that opportunity to thank the Count De Saint Fal, for obliging me with the company of the pilgrim. ‘It will be time





‘time enough, Miss,’ replied he, ‘to make your acknowledgments, when I have been so happy as to be really serviceable to you: the least hint will always suffice to make me immediately execute your commands.’ The pilgrim coming into the room, hindered me from making a proper reply. While Saint Fal was speaking to her, I examined with great attention her whole person. She was a smart, brown woman, with large lively black eyes; about twenty-two; an engaging aspect, though with a particular melancholy cast: she had on a waistcoat of very fine cotton, with other apparel suitable, excepting a coarse red mantelet over her shoulders, adorned with shells; a rush hat, cocked boat-ways, and lined with yellow taffety, seemed more designed to set her off, than for use; tall and well-made, with an easy carriage; the tan on her face shewed she had been some time exposed to the inclemencies of the weather; but when her gloves were off, the fineness of her complexion was very conspicuous.

Whilst I made this scrutiny, a few sighs forced their way. As often as we compassionate the sufferings of others, if we have any reason to complain ourselves, we greedily appropriate the greatest part of our pity. I was much affected with this young person’s conversation, frequently interrupted by her sighs and complaints against the severity of her fate, which was seldom mentioned without tears: this was abundantly sufficient to make me follow her example. I comforted her, and took her in my arms with as much familiarity as if we had been long acquainted. These tokens of my tenderness mitigated her sorrow, and were requited with equal proofs of her affection to me.

Dinner being brought in, put an end to our conversation, which was melancholy enough; and after some little ceremony, we sat down to table, when Saint Fal and I saw, to our great surprise, some coarse bread and water placed before the pilgrim. This made us very pressing to engage her to eat some soup with us; but in vain: she desiring to be excused, on account that, if she complied with our request, her penance, by a law she had imposed on herself, must last eight days longer; otherwise, the current day was the last, being on the morrow to change her way of life to

something more conformable to the rest of the world. These reasons prevailed, and we left her to follow her own method. When dinner was done, which notwithstanding Saint Fal’s endeavours to divert and make me eat heartily, was not long, the pretty pilgrim prevented us on the subject of her history, saying, nevertheless, that if we were straitened for time, she would cut off the circumstantial part, and give us what was most material in few words. Saint Fal, who seemed more attentive than ever to find out what was agreeable to me, discovered that such a mangling of the story would deprive me of a great deal of pleasure; upon which he immediately replied, that my journey was of no such consequence, as to deprive me so soon of such an amiable companion; adding, with a smile, that he believed it would not be very disagreeable, if he should entreat me to stay till next day, which he thought necessary to prevent a too great fatigue. I bowed to him, as an acknowledgment of his complaisance.

The pilgrim seeing us disposed to hear her, said, before she entered upon her story, that she was overjoyed at what was concluded on, as well as at the pleasure of my acquaintance; not being to go herself till the day following, for that she expected a chaise to meet her overnight, in which she intended to reach her journey’s end.

When the cloth was taken away, and we left to ourselves, the young pilgrim began her history in the following manner.

‘I am the daughter of a very rich physician of Montpellier, whose reputation was so great, that he was often sent for a hundred leagues off: it is true, in the cures he performed, an unusual success seemed to attend him, scarce one patient in thirty miscarrying under his hands, which contributed very much to the great vogue he was in to his last breath.

‘At the proper age I received an education suitable to the fortune designed for me. The best masters were employed. The facility with which I took my learning, occasioned a favourable opinion of my parts; and the charms people fancied they saw in me, or rather my great fortune, soon drew a crowd of very considerable admirers.

‘The desire my father had, being already ready

ready advanced in years, to see me married, an earnestness of which he often expressed when we were amongst ourselves, occasioned my being continually importuned to make a choice; but the antipathy I had to matrimony was so great, that I could not bear to hear it mentioned. Every day furnished so many instances of faithless men, and their brutality to their wives when become their masters, by the most submissive addressees, that I could not prevail with myself to increase the number of such unfortunate wretches. These prejudices were so strongly fixed in my mind, that one day I openly declared to my father, who was using all his authority with me to accept of one whose pretensions he favoured, that if he persisted in constraining my inclinations, either a monastery, or death itself, should free me from such importunities. This protestation was followed by a torrent of tears; and, as he perfectly doated on me, it prevailed with him to promise that I should be left entirely at my own disposal.

I was now turned of sixteen; I had not only made a considerable progress in those arts which are usually learned, but even in physick, which my father taught me, and found a pleasure in making me a considerable proficient. Charmed with the disposition I shewed for it, and the ease with which I surmounted all the difficulties of that science, he set no bounds to his lectures. My memory, like a fruitful field, yielded a plentiful harvest of whatever was sown in it. Anatomy, botany, osteology, all were displayed and understood. In fine, at eighteen I was so far advanced in the mysteries of Esculapius, that I wrote a treatise on physick in Latin concerning —, and dedicated it to my father. The reputation I acquired by this work reached the most distant countries, convincing proofs whereof my father received in a short time.

There came a letter from a physician at Lisbon, acquainting him that there had fallen into his hands a book written by his daughter; that he had read it very attentively, and formed a judgment of her capacity, from this learned production; that as he attributed this prodigy to the great skill of the father, he thought him the

properest person in the world to form an only son of his; that he begged, in consideration of the science they mutually professed, he would take the care of him, there being nothing he would not do to merit a favour he had so much at heart.

My father, who still persisted in his design of marrying me, thought he would not break the promise he had made, resolved to take in this boarder, hoping that, under a pretext of leaving the care of his studies to me, on account of his own age and infirmities, he might give the young man an opportunity of gaining my affections, and weaning me from the relish I had for a single life; expecting that, being continually in my company, if his person was any thing tolerable, he might at last compass what was so much desired.

In pursuance to this, the Lisbon physician had a very civil answer which accepted of his proposal, acquainting him that he might send his son as soon as he pleased, and that no endeavours should be wanting to convince him he was not deceived in the choice he had made.

It is true, my father took an extraordinary sort of precaution before he sent his answer. As he had no other view in receiving this boarder but what has been already mentioned, he privately informed himself from Lisbon, whether the physician's son was of a turn likely to please the ladies. He was overjoyed to hear that his person was exceedingly amiable, and his conduct and manners without reproach; upon this he immediately wrote, as I said before, and waited an answer with great impatience.

In eight days time he had the pleasure of a letter from the physician, with an account of the son's being on his journey. My father acquainted my mother and me of his coming, but in an artful manner: in order to surprise me and work the desired effect in my heart, he told my mother, pretending not to observe I overheard him, that what he disliked in the affair was the young man's being very deformed and ugly. He enlarged upon the disgust which must necessarily arise from living with such people, and that he would gladly have excused himself, but the person in question was

so earnestly recommended by those for whom he had the greatest respect and consideration, that he chose rather to undergo the mortification, than disoblige so many of his best friends.

The aversion I always had to men, made me very little attentive to what my father said; it only served to form in my mind an exceeding disagreeable idea of our future boarder: but, how was I surprized! when one night at supper there entered the room a young man, beautiful beyond expression; who, as we were previously informed, was the boarder expected from Lisbon. My father received him with open arms, overjoyed to find he was not imposed on, and persuaded by the astonishment I betrayed, he had hit upon the right method of compassing his designs.

It is true, the graceful appearance and polite behaviour of this stranger both disturbed and surprized me: to expect to see a deformed person, and find him exceeding handsome, must make a deep impression on a young heart. I could not refrain from viewing him, in hopes of discovering some defects, but found it was in vain. His hair, which was of an ash colour, fell carelessly in large ringlets on his shoulders; and, notwithstanding the disorder his voyage had occasioned in his dress, his air had something so grand in it, that after a long scrutiny I could not possibly dislike him. I rose from table, nettled to find nothing in him that suited the aversion I fancied I had to the whole sex, and notwithstanding my father and mother's commands for me to stay, I retired to my chamber, crying like a child.

Is it not with justice that capriciousness is looked upon to be the distinguishing characteristick of our whole sex? Was not my behaviour on this occasion a singular instance of it? My heart and eyes were no sooner freed from the impression I have already mentioned, but I found myself more averse to matrimony than ever: in vain did my affections struggle against so unreasonable a conduct; my obstinacy prevailed over the importunities of my parents and my own inclinations, for in a few days the young man's presence disarmed the haughtiness of my heart, as my father plainly perceived. In order to succeed in their

designs, it was resolved that I should read a course of physick to the boarder. I piqued myself on complying on this occasion, and hiding from Belizai (for so the boarder was called) the pleasure his company afforded: but, how weak are we when in love! and how difficult it is to gain such victories, without hazarding the most dangerous revolutions! The perpetual constraint I was under to disguise my sentiments, and the constant guard I was obliged to keep over myself, was too great a shock to my inclinations for a tender constitution to support: I sunk under the weight, and fell dangerously ill.

Belizai never left my bed-side: if my resolution gave way at the sight of him, he was not less captivated on his side; he secretly admired me from the first, but having discovered my humour, and regulating his behaviour upon the antipathy I expressed to the softer passions, his conduct, either through timidity or discretion, was so circumspect and restrained, that, led by my capricious temper, I blamed him for it in my heart. But when I fell sick, he left me no farther room to find fault with him. He threw off all restraint when he saw the danger I was in, and gave very convincing proofs both of his passion and grief. The transports he indulged himself in were so acceptable to my father, that he promised Belizai, if it should please God to restore my health, he would join our hands in case no obstacle arose from any dislike of mine. Transported with this promise, and looking upon me, as he told me, in the quality of his dear wife, he would scarce suffer any one else to do the least thing for me. The condition to which I was reduced, and his known discretion, pleaded an indulgence for his tenderness; but the small-pox soon appearing, and my father being apprehensive of his boarder's health, he was debarred from coming into my chamber. The timorous Belizai obeyed, but with so much regret and vexation, that he lost his appetite. My father perceiving this, and fearing his over-precaution might do more harm than good, what he endeavoured to procure for him to his liberty: this, however, called a favour, was not granted; but he presently recovered his usual chearfulness. During

days of Belizai's being removed for
 the reason's above mentioned, when
 the intervals of my illness permitted,
 I was sensible of his absence, and suf-
 fered cruelly by it, breathing out
 abundance of sighs, without discover-
 ing the real cause. "Ah! without
 doubt," said I to myself, "Belizai
 is gone, discouraged, as he well may,
 by my indifference; he is gone, and
 offers elsewhere those vows which
 here found so cold a reception: or
 rather, has not my illness disfigured
 me to that degree, that the little
 beauty which once could secure his
 affections is now no more!" Either
 reflection pierced my very soul. These
 agitations increased my illness to that
 degree, that had not Belizai returned
 as he did by my father's permission,
 life was fleeting fast away: his pre-
 sence called it back. The despair he
 expressed at my extreme danger being
 an undeniable proof of his constancy
 and love, was a precious balm, reani-
 mating my benumbed senses. I be-
 gan to recover, but what chiefly con-
 tributed to it, and fed my vanity be-
 sides, was, that being fond of my few
 charms, especially from the time my
 heart was entangled in love, I found
 I should not in the least be marked
 with the small-pox.

My father, who during the course
 of my illness had been cruelly alarm-
 ed, was transported at my recovery:
 he shewed it by the large alms and
 other works of piety he employed as
 an acknowledgment for so great a
 blessing, and to obtain it's continuance
 till my health was fully re-establish-
 ed; being uneasy that all his experi-
 ence and remedies could not prevail
 against a languishing weakness under
 which I laboured. But in three months
 after the small-pox was over, he had
 greater reason than ever to be afflicted,
 for I was seized with a continual vo-
 miting; this was attributed to a dis-
 order of my stomach, and proper re-
 medies were tried, but without suc-
 cess, till in the fourth month it ceased,
 when I began to mend, though I still
 was troubled with a kind of loathing,
 and odd fancies that were not usual.

Belizai still continued his assiduity
 about me; but, notwithstanding my
 secret inclinations, I behaved outward-
 ly as usual. Though I really loved
 him more than myself, yet I could not

conquer an aversion I had to declare
 my mind, as he well deserved for his
 tenderness, love, and complaisance;
 a declaration which at once would
 have compleated the joy of both him
 and the family, being what he so ear-
 nestly desired. My father attributed
 this indifference of Belizai to my old
 aversion in regard of men in general,
 but was still in hopes that in time my
 mind might change.

My health was now entirely re-es-
 tablished, except some twitches I felt,
 which from time to time were almost
 insupportable. The account I gave
 my father of it, and my comparing
 it to a living creature, made him con-
 clude that I had something within me,
 bred by a conflux of humours, that
 preyed upon me, and supported it's
 life at the expence of mine, which it
 wore away by degrees. Examples,
 though not very frequent, are not
 wanting of such phenomena; and
 thence he concluded, to his great a-
 mazement, that it was my case. He
 called a consultation of physicians,
 unwilling to rely on himself in so
 nice a point, and wherein he was so
 nearly concerned. I was examined,
 and it appearing that I felt the mo-
 tions before mentioned, when fasting
 or beginning to eat, it was concluded
 that my father's opinion was prefer-
 able to any thing that had been al-
 ledged on the subject, and that, as the
 case was exceeding dangerous as well
 as extraordinary, an incision was the
 only means of freeing me from what,
 sooner or later, would certainly prove
 my destruction.

This prescription threw the whole
 family into the utmost consternation.
 My father, after drying his tears,
 came and acquainted me with it, hav-
 ing prepared me with all that religion
 or reason could suggest: I must own
 that the conclusion of his harangue
 struck a terror into me, since I found
 that in performing the operation the
 least accident might be fatal. I took
 that night to consider of it, and any
 one will easily imagine, that in such
 a situation I got but little rest. It was
 near day before I shut my eyes; ne-
 vertheless, oppressed as I was, I be-
 gan to doze, when on a sudden I
 started up at a voice which said dis-
 tinctly, "Lindamine, be sure you
 don't consent to the operation; in two
 months

months you will be certainly cured." Terrified at the voice, and covered with a cold sweat, I called aloud for help to my father, whose chamber was near mine. He immediately rose, and came to know the occasion of my outcries. When I told him what had happened, he endeavoured to bring me to myself, by persuading me, that considering the anxiety I went to bed in, it was easy to comprehend that the vapours of a sleep, so reasonably disturbed, might occasion a dream, which would make the greater impression, as it arose from the apprehensions the soul is continually under with regard to a separation from the body: for a confirmation of what he asserted, he reminded me of what I read a hundred times in our treatises of physick, that in a violent fever, the subtle vapours which mount to the brain cause so great a disturbance and confusion in the several parts about the pineal gland, that it conceives objects very far different from what they really are in themselves; that they not only represent them thus to the disturbed imagination, but even to the eyes themselves. It sometimes happens, that the very ears seem to hear, even when we are awake, whole sentences, which are nothing but the produce of a disordered brain.

These remarks, however well founded, made no impression: I was too well satisfied of what had happened, neither had I any fever, and consequently not in the situation my father supposed; besides, my studies had not entirely conquered the prejudices of childhood; and our sex, whatever progress it may make in learning, always retains some little share of its natural weakness. I dreaded apparitions, and imagined the voice to come from something of that nature: I was positive I had been acquainted with the voice; from whence I concluded that some friend of the family just departed had given me that admonition. My father made light of all this, and set it aside by philosophical arguments, which at last convinced me. The great confidence I reposed in his learning and experience obliged me to yield the point, but at the same time I declared to him, that finding myself much better, and free from the pains I had complained of, (which was only a

feint to avoid the operation) I could not think of coming to an extremity. He would have replied, but I fell into such a fit of crying, that out of compassion he gave me his word he would not insist upon it.

Notwithstanding the danger with which the physicians threatened me, in case I did not comply with what they ordered, my health improved daily, excepting those interior motions I felt, but did not dare mention for fear of the fatal operation; nevertheless, the uneasiness this new habit of body occasioned, was far inferior to what I laboured under on account of my sleep: naturally I slept but little, and was so alert that a mouse would wake me; but after the small-pox it was quite otherwise; I was so altered as to this particular, that I not only slept many hours, but it was often morally impossible to wake me; my maid assuring me that she frequently pulled me about for half an hour before I opened my eyes, and sometimes could not affect it: that one day particularly she was very much frightened, imagining I was in a fit, and would have called my father, but that I had strictly charged her never to acquaint him with my ailments, for fear of bringing on the terrible operation with which I was threatened. This detail made me renew the prohibition for the same reason, and from my own knowledge in physick I took such remedies as are proper to thin the blood, and of course to prevent the ill consequence of a continual sleepiness.

One morning, being awake sooner than ordinary, Belizai sent in my maid to desire leave to speak a word with me: I was then in bed, as I generally had been of late, by reason of a heavy weariness I could no way account for, and which made my father and mother very uneasy, lest what the physicians had foretold should come to pass. Decency obliged me at first to refuse Belizai's request; but he, insisting on coming in, and declaring he should not stay a minute, I ordered the maid to remain in the room. He held a letter in his hand with a dejected air, and melancholy painted on his countenance: the very sight of him made me start, without knowing the reason. He trembled as he drew near

the bed-side. "I am going," said he, "to leave you, Mademoiselle, having just now received an account that my father lies at the point of death: my grief—" "It is very natural," said I, interrupting him, pierced to the very soul, and scarce able to dissemble it: "I am much concerned at your trouble."—"Would to God," cried Belizai, not regarding the maid's presence, "it were really so! What a comfort should I receive from your sharing in the affliction I must undergo when absent from you!"—"We mistake each other," replied I, still dissembling; "I mean, the danger your father is in, which has not the least connection with what you just now mentioned."—"It is too evident," replied the charming Belizai, "that you will not understand me. I blush when I own, that what calls me away does not most alarm me: could I but lay open my heart, that you might read what passes there! Whence comes this cruel aversion to men? Am I, too, included in it? Ah, lovely Lindamine, to what has this notion prompted me! How happy should I be, if you do not one day condemn the rashness of a passion, which durst not face the light!"—"I understand you not," replied I, amazed at his dark expressions, and surprized at his looking steadfastly on me, which was not usual. "What fear of the light is it you hint at?" continued I; "what encouragement did I ever give, that you should entertain me with so much assurance upon the subject of love?"—"My right," replied Belizai in confusion, "is of such a nature—" He was going on, when my father came into the room. I was extremely concerned at the interruption of a discourse which so much affected me, and which hitherto it was impossible for me to comprehend.

My father, who by the same post had likewise received the news, came to inform Belizai of the particulars; his voyage was immediately concluded on, the resolving upon which overpowered me. In love, as I was, so awful a presence as my father obliged me to stifle my tears: the moment was now come, in which my weakness must have discovered itself to open view. Belizai retired with my

father, after taking his leave in the most respectful manner: overwhelmed with anguish I sent the maid away; and, being alone, I abandoned myself to affliction.

It was near ten at night before I thought of eating, or would suffer any one to be in my chamber; but finding myself seized with a violent colick, which increased every moment, I rung my bell for help. My maid was scarce entered the room, when I cried out bitterly, and thought myself on the point of expiring: the servant, terrified at the condition I was in, ran to acquaint my father, who immediately entered the room with my mother. Their presence afforded me no relief, nor hindered my moans. My father, with all his skill, was mistaken, and apprehended I should be stifled by the creature the physicians supposed I had within me: he ordered some blood to be taken away, which gave me a little relief; but the fatal colick returning with greater violence than ever, and throwing me into convulsions, he burst into tears, and whispered my mother that there was no hopes of my life, and that I could not possibly survive till morning. This threw the whole family into the utmost despair: physicians and surgeons were called in; and, whilst I was making my confession, consulted what to do. They all agreed, (except one, who, after feeling my pulse, went away shrugging up his shoulders) that in this extremity, the operation should be attempted.

My father was coming into my room to prepare me for such a horrible prescription, not doubting but the presence of mind and good sense I retained in my torments would effect an entire resignation to the will of Heaven; but, alas! there was no occasion for any thing of that kind. How shall I dare to acknowledge my shame? continued the lovely pilgrim, casting down her eyes and blushing; Nature, pressing to ease me of a common and usual burden, made so violent an effort, that, the whole house ringing with my cries, I brought forth a little creature without any one's assistance. My mother smote her breast at the sight, and my father, quite thunder-struck, left the room with a broken heart. The apprehension lest reproaches might

might prove of fatal consequence, prevailed on my mother to stifle her rage; she constrained herself so far as to make much of me, and serve me in place of a midwife. I suffered myself to be guided, without the least suspicion of what happened, believing very sincerely that it was only the strange creature so often mentioned, from which Heaven was pleased at last to free me.

I gave the greater credit to it as the child was still-born, which might very well happen from the difficulty of the birth, and want of proper assistance, as the real cause of my illness was not surmised. Ten days passed on in this manner, during which my father never came near me. I enquired for him every moment, as also a description of the creature from which I had been freed. I could get no answer to my questions; sighs and tears generally followed, which was all the satisfaction I received.

But as I had recovered some strength, and thought myself out of any immediate danger of death, I resolved to rise and see what was become of my father, who never appeared. The sorrow under which my mother and the servant seemed to sink, disturbed me very much, and their answers not agreeing exactly together, I threw myself out of bed, fully resolved to penetrate into this mystery. "Go to your bed again, cruel child!" said my mother, forcing me to comply, "and do not compleat the number of your crimes in too soon destroying my life by the loss of yours, which cannot be so far off after the dishonour you have brought upon yourself: be satisfied with the bitter anguish with which you have overwhelmed me, by bringing your father to the grave through your vile behaviour, and do not add to your farther reproach."—"Good God! what is it I hear?" cried I in transport. "What stroke is this that is aimed at me? My father dead! I bring him to the grave!"—"Yes, cruel creature!" replied my mother, interrupting me, and shedding a torrent of tears, "your father paid the debt of Nature two days after that fatal one, which you blackened by spreading shame and confusion over the family."—"Heavens!" replied

I, weeping bitterly, "what crimes have I committed? what am I accused of? Wretch that I am, in the very jaws of death, languishing for so many months, not seeing the face of any one, what is it I am thus reproached withal?"—"But, daughter, my dear daughter," cried my mother, "to what purpose do you thus plead ignorance? how can you hope to hide an infamy which I was an eye-witness of, and every body knows? Notwithstanding all the precautions we employed to screen our shame from the eyes of the world, the whole town is too well informed—" "Informed of what?" cried I, interrupting her, and past all patience at what she said. "Explain yourself better, for God is my witness—" "Do not, Lindamine," continued my mother, "do not profane that adorable name, lest immediate vengeance should fall upon you; on the contrary, you ought to thank the Lord for the signal favour of preserving you a life which your indiscretion exposed, and of which you were unworthy, by being the occasion of your child's dying without baptism: that might have been prevented, had you placed a due confidence in your mother, and frankly owned what kind of assistance you wanted; a mother, however afflicted she may be with such a confession, yet when so dangerous a moment is at hand forgets what is passed."

I should have suffered her to have gone on much longer, so confounded I was and astonished with this discourse. Imagining that she made an impression, and that grief and shame restrained me from returning an answer, "Take courage," continued she, embracing me; "what is passed cannot be remedied: your first step at present towards an amendment, is to implore the forgiveness of Heaven for your crimes, and I will join with you in good works, that we may obtain so great a mercy. The death of a child and a parent can never be sufficiently atoned for; nevertheless, we ought not to despair," continued she, seeing me almost choaked with excess of grief. "The gospel assures us, that a contrite heart opens the gates of mercy. Come, daughter," continued

"tinued my mother, fearing lest I should
 "expire in the agony in which she saw
 "me, "we will say no more; should it
 "throw you into a fever it may be fatal.
 "Heaven forbid! what would become
 "of me, if I should lose all that is left
 "me in this world! No, my dear
 "child," added this wretched parent,
 "embracing me, "you will not over-
 "whelm me anew? You always loved
 "your mother, and you know she
 "doats on you. Dry up your tears; I
 "forget all: I have said it; and the
 "cruel injury we have received shall be
 "atoned for by your marrying the per-
 "son; who, notwithstanding all the
 "discretion I know you are possessed
 "of, has found means to delude you.
 "Name him. Perhaps he absconds;
 "but let him return: we have an ample
 "fortune, sufficient to settle him very
 "happily in the world. It is scarce
 "possible, whoever he is, that he can
 "be so dishonourable as to refuse you
 "this reparation."

"All this was but so many riddles,
 "as I assured my mother: she bewail-
 "ed my obstinacy, and fearing lest her
 "impatience might be of ill consequence
 "to my health, went out of my cham-
 "ber all in tears. She was no sooner
 "gone but I renewed my lamentations,
 "and threw myself a second time out of
 "bed in order to follow her. The
 "maid, who was much stronger, put
 "me to bed again. "In the name of
 "God, Fanny!" said I, "explain what
 "my mother has been saying. I with
 "child! I brought to bed! I really
 "believe, if I may use such an expres-
 "sion, my mother is gone distracted."
 "—"Aye, but it is too true for all that!"
 "replied the servant, very coarsely; "and
 "you would do much better, Miss, to
 "own who has abused you."—"You
 "are an impertinent hussy," answered I,
 "giving her a box on the ear; "it be-
 "comes you mighty well, truly, to
 "talk to me in this manner: learn the
 "respect you owe me. My mother is
 "mistress, and may say what she pleases,
 "though, God knows, I bear it very
 "impatiently even from her; but, for
 "you, let me hear no more of it." The
 "servant, provoked at my behaviour,
 "took so much liberty in a pert answer
 "she made me, that, transported be-
 "yond all bounds, I caught up a can-
 "dlestick which stood by my bed-side,
 "and threw it with so much force, that

"lighting unhappily on her temple, she
 "expired in about two hours time.

"Imagine, Mademoiselle," continued
 the unfortunate pilgrim with a deep
 sigh, "the despair this last sad accident
 "occasioned. I got out of bed, bewail-
 "ing what I had done, and ran in my
 "shift like a mad creature to my mo-
 "ther's chamber. She was crying,
 "and seemed frightened at the sight of
 "me. She came and embraced me,
 "and led me back to my chamber with
 "all the caresses her tenderness could
 "inspire; but, how great was her con-
 "sternation when she beheld the maid
 "grovelling on the floor in her blood!
 "She called for help; a surgeon was
 "sent for: but all in vain; his skill
 "could not save her life.

"A plausible account, you may ima-
 "gine, was given of this accident; as
 "there was no witness present, and we
 "much known and respected, the author
 "of the murder was never called in
 "question.

"In the mean time, this last adven-
 "ture, together with what my mother
 "had alledged, affected me so much,
 "that I fell very ill, and lay at the point
 "of death. The convincing proofs she
 "had given me of my having really lain
 "in, though I knew myself entirely in-
 "nocent, afforded me a gloomy light in
 "my fatal destiny, and perplexing my
 "mind with so many contradictions,
 "brought me into the condition I just
 "now mentioned. My mother was so
 "terrified, that she made a vow of going
 "in pilgrimage to our Lady's of Lux-
 "embourg, if God would please to re-
 "store my health.

"Her prayers were heard, doubtless,
 "for the greater punishment of my sins.
 "On my recovery, she began to think
 "of her grave, the way to which our
 "misfortunes had already paved; but
 "my persisting not to acknowledge who
 "it was she imagined had abused me,
 "(a refusal she considered as a proof of
 "an obstinate and wicked heart) was
 "such a finishing stroke, that she sunk
 "under it. Finding her dissolution
 "draw near, and seeing me in tears by
 "her bed-side, she conjured me, by the
 "condition I saw her in, to give her the
 "satisfaction she had so long desired.
 "What could I say, ignorant as I was
 "of what had happened, but convinced
 "that if there was any thing in it, some
 "very extraordinary means had been
 "employed?

employed? My mother could not be persuaded but that I dissembled the truth, and upon that account never looked towards me during the few days she had to live; neither could my tears nor intreaties prevail upon her to give me her blessing. She assured me, just before she expired, that sooner or later God would punish my false heart.

Her death, attended with so many cruel circumstances, threw me into such agonies of despair, that I made several attempts on my own life. My relations, who never left me after this last accident, watched me day and night; and it is to their vigilance I owe my preservation from an untimely end. This frenzy lasted above a month. It is true, the frequent exhortations of a worthy clergyman, whose learning equalled his great compassion, brought me by degrees to myself. He prevailed on me, after hearing all my misfortunes, to have recourse to Almighty God. My sincerity and innocence appeared to him indisputable: religion had gained it's ascendant over me, and I made my confession with the dispositions of a sincere penitent. The good priest guessed, from all the circumstances of my misfortunes, that some unnatural means had been basely employed on this occasion, or that a sleeping potion had been secretly administered, since I was entirely innocent. This seemed the more likely, from some particulars I informed him of; and finding how much I suffered in relating all that had passed, he comforted me by representing, that as I could not foresee what was to happen, I might reasonably hope to find mercy in the sight of God; but, if I had persisted in rebelling against his will, I should have excluded myself from his holy grace: that Providence ordered every thing for the best, and out of love to his creatures, often moved it's secret springs to draw us to itself; that in misfortunes like mine, the only resource was to submit to it's eternal decrees.

Such exhortations, often repeated with great fervour, had the effect the good curate proposed. After a spiritual retreat of nine days which he enjoined, methought an inspiration from Heaven induced me to make a vow of fulfilling what my mother had pro-

posed during my illness; besides, I firmly determined at my return to become a nun, bestowing one half of my estate on the poor, and dividing the other among my relations, without regard to proximity of blood, but as their several wants might require.

After this plan was formed, I communicated it to my worthy director. He congratulated me on such pious resolutions, inspired, as he said, by the Divine Grace; but he disapproved of the pilgrimage, as liable to great inconveniences, to which, in so long a journey, a young woman must unavoidably be exposed. He offered a dispensation from the vow; but he found me so strongly bent on the performance, that he was obliged to consent, after giving me the best advice for regulating my conduct, and avoiding the dangers his prudence foresaw would attend the execution of my design. Before I began my pilgrimage, I settled my affairs, reserving only what was absolutely necessary for the state of life I was determed to embrace. My relations used their utmost endeavours to dissuade me from making over my fortune, justly apprehending, that if I should change my mind, I must depend upon the courtesy of others for a subsistence; but my steadiness surmounted all these obstacles; and, as they perceived I was entirely taken up with my project, they left me at liberty to act as I judged proper. A design of embracing a religious life has this particular privilege, that it supplies the incapacity of minors.

The day before my departure I underwent an assault little inferior to the rest. I received on the same day two letters from Belizai. The first informed me how much he suffered by being separated from me, and that nothing could effect the least alteration in his sentiments: he acquainted me that his father was dead, and had left him a plentiful fortune; that decency alone had prevented him till now from assuring me that his happiness was incompatible with my absence; he besought me to accept of his hand and heart with all he possessed; he exhorted me to reflect very seriously on what he proposed, declaring, that in some sense I was not at liberty to do otherwise, nor so much my own mistress.

‘ trefs as to dispose of myself without his consent.

‘ I was still at a loss to comprehend the meaning of all this, which I thought a very extraordinary method of courtship; but the second letter, dated two days after the first, and wrote lest I should hesitate in coming to a determination, fully apprized me of my fatal destiny, by his declaring himself very roundly to be my husband. He there acquainted me with the base means he had employed to obtain that title, vainly endeavouring to palliate them by the excess of his passion, and a dread of losing me, too well grounded on the antipathy I expressed to any engagement; that having considered all this, he made use of some very extraordinary means to lay me asleep: that at first he had no farther view than to remedy a want of sleep, from which I suffered very much during my illness; but the opportunity appearing so favourable to his future lawful designs, as he called them, he could not resist the temptation; that he had flattered himself, in case a pledge of his love should appear, decency would effect what his passion and addresses could not compass. How far he was in the right, my behaviour must determine.

‘ The second letter justly incensed me to a very great degree. Notwithstanding the prejudice of my secret passion for this unworthy lover, I firmly resolved never to see his face more, and that nothing should ever prevail on me to change my mind. I resolved to exert myself in endeavouring to forget him. Addressing myself to God, I made a sacrifice to Him of whatever inclination might remain, and renewed my vow of becoming a nun; a resolution I have hitherto persisted in, and will never lay aside, trusting in God that his holy grace will support me against every thing that may tend to shake my resolution.

‘ It is now a year and a day since I came from home in this equipage. I have had the good fortune to execute my design without meeting with any troublesome adventure; and, as my vow is fulfilled this day, to-morrow I bid adieu to the world.

‘ Thus I have given you, Mademoiselle, the history of my misfortunes, which will be ever fresh in my memo-

ry. For my greater humiliation, I have made it a law to myself always to give a detail of them to such as desire it, to the end that this history, being made publick, may teach young women to dread the vile artifices which men are so apt to employ in seducing their innocence, and to be always on their guard against such beasts of prey, the more to be feared, when emboldened in the havock they make by any alluring endowments of body or mind.

‘ To this recital of my misfortunes there is one condition annexed, which I do not previously mention, because I am persuaded nobody will refuse to comply with it; it is, Mademoiselle, to do some act of piety in my behalf, that God will please to give me perseverance in the holy sentiments with which he has inspired me, and strength to put them in execution.’

Thus did Lindamine finish her story, wiping away her tears, which she could not restrain. I thanked her for the complaisance she had shewn, and enquired how far off the convent might be whither she proposed to retire. Her answer was, that she had not as yet pitched upon any place; that it was indifferent to her; and, as she intended to forsake the world entirely, she proposed, when her steward arrived, to make him bespeak some convent where she was not known: that for this reason she would not fix her retirement in her own country; elsewhere she had no objection, if she were received.

Upon hearing this, a thought came into my head, that might be equally serviceable to her, and give me an opportunity of sending some account of myself to dear Saint Agnes, ever present in my heart. With this view, I recommended very earnestly to Lindamine the monastery I had lately left, promising to direct her to a lady who honoured me with her friendship, and who would take a singular pleasure, through a sincere piety and obliging disposition, to serve her as far as lay in her power; that it was the surest means of completing her design, as she would be received with open arms; and being so well recommended, no enquiry would be made.

Lindamine made her acknowledgements with great vivacity, and accepted very kindly of my proposal. I talked a great deal to her concerning Saint Agnes,

Agnes, praising her sweet disposition and agreeable conversation. I spent the remainder of the day in entertaining the pretty pilgrim with the satisfaction she would find in the company of my friend, whose adventures, when acquainted with them, would interest her much, and oblige her to own that Saint Agnes, in some respects, was more to be pitied than herself. Lindamine seemed very much surprized at this, and asked what misfortunes were comparable to her own.

The perplexity into which this question threw me, made Saint Fal rise from his seat, easily apprehending that, as matters were, his presence might be some restraint upon me. Obliging and well-bred as he was, he desired leave to go before it was too late, and try the benefit of the air for a head-ache he had been troubled with since morning. As he addressed himself to me, I answered with a bow; upon which he retired.

When Lindamine and I were alone, I pressed her again to pitch upon the convent I had mentioned. She assured me, that she would go next day to Madame De G—, and as soon as that lady had settled the terms of her admission she would enter. This point being settled, I resumed the subject of Saint Agnes, and related her history in short to Lindamine, that she might entertain the better opinion of her. The pilgrim confessed, that if the fair nun had the least of her crimes to reproach herself withal, she (Lindamine) would allow herself to be the least unhappy of the two; but that no misfortune was equal to the stings of a guilty conscience.

Lindamine very readily gathered from my friend's history, that I was entrusted with some letters of consequence, which I had not as yet found means to send: she told me very obligingly, that if I would venture them in her hands, she would answer for their being delivered; that she would send the next day a trusty servant express with them, who should return and give her an account of the execution of his commission. I was so well pleased with the feasibility and expedition of the proposal, that, transported to think how overjoyed Saint Agnes would be to have her business so well followed, I threw my arms about Lindamine's neck for joy. This lovely creature, charmed with my friendly dis-

position, had a great mind to know, in her turn, my history; and though her politeness made her readily accept of the excuses I framed, yet she could not forbear renewing the attack several times: at last, I told her with a smile, that it would be a very ill return for all her civilities, to trouble her with a detail of my misfortunes; that Saint Agnes should satisfy her curiosity, and by an agreeable manner of relating the history, would render it less insupportable. Lindamine allowed of this frivolous apology; but it only served, as I was afterwards informed, to increase her impatience. As the time left for dispatching our business grew very short, we set ourselves to writing. I was very glad of this opportunity to beg of Madame De G—the continuance of her friendship, and to give her an account of my present situation. My letter to Saint Agnes gave me the least trouble, though by far the longest. After letting her know how happy I was in having such an opportunity of serving her, I desired that if the marquis should chance to come to the monastery, (which I imagined might possibly happen) she would please to inform him, that, whatever befel me, I should preserve the most affectionate and faithful sentiments in his regard.

We spent so much time in writing, that it was eight o'clock before we finished our dispatches. I was surprized that Saint Fal did not return: his polite behaviour, and the confidence shewn in leaving me to myself at this present, knowing I had it in my power to escape, as I had formerly done; this not only effaced all resentment of his behaviour on the first day, but even created an esteem, and gave me some uneasiness for his absence, as it was not a fit hour to be in the fields in winter. Enquiring for him, I was answered that he was gone to kill some game, and very likely watching to shoot a hare. I knew very well, being bred in the country, that sportsmen often staid out late. I returned something satisfied to Lindamine, but was much surprized to find at her feet a very handsome gentleman, expressing himself with great emotion, and from whom the pretty pilgrim was endeavouring to free herself, with words frequently interrupted with her tears. I was upon the point of retiring, without examining any farther, when Lindamine cried out, 'No, no, dear Jenny; come

‘ come in and lend me your assistance, to guard my heart against the attacks of this vile man; the unworthy lover you have already heard me mention. Behold the brutal ravisher! who endeavours to alledge the most outrageous injury as a proof of the tenderest affection.’—‘ Yes, charming Lindamine!’ cried Belizai, interrupting her with great eagerness, ‘ may Heaven punish me this instant, if I had the least intention of offending you, from the first moment my heart, captivated by your charms, to the name of lover would fain have joined that of husband! See here the first origin of my crime: your coldness; the distaste you expressed on all occasions against matrimony; your father’s consent, which by discovering his views, I was in hopes of obtaining, if I could bring my designs to bear; all this put together, compleatly seduced and blinded me. I plead guilty, my charming Lindamine! That you really love me is no secret; why, therefore, through an unseasonable punctilio, will you make us both unhappy! my wife, my dear wife! as you are?’—‘ Hold, barbarous man!’ cried the pilgrim, all in tears, ‘ what odious title do you give me! what base means—’ ‘ O Heaven! dare you—’ ‘ Yes, you are my wife!’ replied Belizai, eagerly grasping her knees; ‘ nothing but death shall wrest from me the amiable name of husband. Let this lady be judge,’ continued the wretched lover turning to me; ‘ she shall decide.’—‘ I take you at your word,’ replied Lindamine, casting a look at me; ‘ I am satisfied her sentiments of honour and religion are such, that I have no room to doubt her passing sentence in my favour.’

Belizai, finding his destiny placed in my hands, rose up, and began with exaggerating his passion, tenderness, and constancy. He set forth the most specious pretences in excuse of his rashness and its consequences: he endeavoured to make me enter into his opinion; which was, that since what had happened could not be recalled, decency required that marriage should supply the defects of his past conduct; alledging that, abstracted from his love, probity obliged him to insist on the marriage; from thence he passed to the torments he had suffered whilst absent from all

that was dear to him in this life. He fought to move my compassion, by giving me an account of the advantageous matches he had refused for Lindamine’s sake: he affirmed, that being pressed by his relations in that particular, he left Lisbon to avoid their importunities, and came to Montpellier a year ago, to make a sacrifice of all those offers to his mistress, and present her his hand; that finding, to his grief, that she was gone from thence, and not knowing where to find her, he had wandered about in search of her ever since; that returning to Montpellier, and luckily discovering by mere accident that she had sent for a chaise, he watched it’s setting out, and followed it without being perceived, in order to throw himself at his mistress’s feet, and either obtain her pardon, or an end of his afflictions by the violence of his despair.

I gave Belizai full scope to utter what he had to say; then turning to Lindamine, I asked her if she had any thing to add on this subject to what she had already said. Her answer was, that she had not, and that nothing in the world should prevail upon her to alter her resolutions.

Encouraged by these words, I addressed myself to Belizai in the following manner. ‘ Since you are pleased, Sir, to refer yourself to my decision,’ said I, ‘ give me leave to tell you, my sentiments from yours on this affair are very different: you must excuse me if I assert, that in my opinion, you are not only unworthy of the favour to which you pretend, but even of being received into the rank of those, whose strict regard for virtue give them a just elevation of thought; since you have so outrageously trampled on those very dictates of honour and probity, upon which you seem, with so little reason, to value yourself. Is it possible, with your education and parts, (for it were injustice to deny you either) that you should act in a manner so inconsistent with the duty you owe yourself? The deluding, or even forcing a woman, black as they are, fall short of the crime you have committed: the two first may be compared to two men of superior strength and activity, attacking two others, who, by their known want of skill and courage, are no way able to withstand them; whereas your con-

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duct resembles exactly that of a base assassin, who stabs his adversary in the back or asleep. In the first case, the aggressors leave room for making a defence; a lucky accident may possibly elude their strength and skill: but in the case before us, who can possibly be secure? In truth, I must say it, your behaviour in this affair is properly an assassination. I will say no more. You plead, Sir, that your love prompted you to perpetrate this outrage. No, Sir; real love never leads to villainy: besides, it is not to be called love, where the passion ultimately centers in itself. A lady who was pleased to have some share in my education, and who is very justly admired for her nice discernment, always asserted, that true esteem not only wishes it's object happy, but even exerts all possible means to render it so, even in the highest degree that can be desired. But what obligation do you lay upon your mistress, whom you admire because she is handsome, bears a good character, is sweet tempered; has, if you please, uncommon talents; in a word, compleatly qualified to be a companion for life? A hundred others will be in love with her as well as you, but perhaps are unwilling to make a sacrifice to her of their several inclinations and fortunes. Put the case, that this mistress, at an unguarded hour, should be susceptible of any frailty; a man of worth who proposes to marry her, would be the first to support her against any such weakness, far from taking the advantage of such an inclination. If you seek to make yourself agreeable by lasting recommendations, such as probity, virtue, and honour, the esteem you create will always subsist; you must even, when requisite, sacrifice your very love itself; and if you cannot compleat the happiness of the person beloved, you ought to contribute all that lies in your power to effect it in the arms of another: a sentiment, truly noble, and of which we see but few instances; nevertheless, I have known those whose greatness of soul would not have failed them on such an occasion.

'In fine, Sir,' continued I, 'there is no real happiness without the strictest regard to honour and probity. The

reason is, because when passions have no other support than themselves, they mutually clash and shake each other; whereas, that love which has virtue for it's guide, fixes happiness, as it is not liable to the vexations and impetuous storms the follies of a disorderly inclination usually create. How slender soever my experience may be, I think I have given you a faint sketch of the real character of a man of worth, and an honourable lover, to both which I think Mademoiselle Lindamine justly intitled, and which, had she found them in you, would have made her compleatly happy, if she really has those favourable sentiments in your behalf as you seem to assert; but, through an unhappy contrast, she is become the most wretched of her sex. Reflect how many cruel evils have flowed from your rashness; she loses her father; provoked by an impertinent answer, embroues her hands in blood; brings her mother to the grave; and is on the point of plunging herself headlong into eternity. To compleat the whole, she lies under the strictest obligations, both of honour and religion, to make herself a sacrifice, and retire for the rest of her life to a monastery, in order to appease the remorse of a guilty conscience. Let so generous an effort be equalled on your side; or, if you cannot obtain so noble a victory over yourself, at least give this last proof of your love, not to disturb her in the execution of what she proposes.'

I had no sooner named a monastery, but Belizai threw himself again at her feet, with such marks of a sincere repentance, uttering the most moving speeches, accompanied with signs of so real a despair, that the beautiful creature's passion began to revive; some sparks seemed to force their way. Belizai, as cunning as amorous, perceiving the effect his presence and discourse had, pursued his advantage so warmly, and gave it so many different turns, that, with a deep sigh, followed by a shower of tears, she owned her happiness inseparable from his, and that her vow was the only obstacle left. Transported with this acknowledgment, Belizai told her that such vows were of very little consequence; that any priest had sufficient power to grant a dispensation from it, the obtain-

ing of which would be attended with the less difficulty, as there were such cogent reasons for their being married. This Lindamine easily refuted, and beginning again to mention her vow and the monastery, Belizai in a violent transport drew his sword, and would have thrown himself upon it. 'Hold, cruel man!' cried Lindamine, her blood running chill in her veins; 'will you strike the finishing stroke to all my misfortunes? Put up your sword. Alas! I cannot survive you a moment. I must yield. No, you shall not die, you are too dear to me. Heavens! what would become of me if I had this death besides to lament! Do not, Belizai, do not thus terrify me any more! I tremble still, and am unable, in the consternation you have occasioned, to come to any resolution. Allow me this night to implore the assistance of Heaven, that I may be directed by it's inspirations: in the morning you shall have my answer; alas! too conformable, perhaps, to my inclinations.' The lover would have replied, but Lindamine assured him that she would not hear any thing more; that he had already but too successfully prevailed; that he ought to be satisfied with the promise she had made, and entreated him to retire. He complied, but with such a visible sorrow as moved me very much.

Lindamine returned to me, drying her tears, and assured me that nothing should prevail on her to alter the resolution she had taken. 'Ought I not to blush,' said she, 'when I look you in the face, after betraying so much weakness? But, dearest Jenny, deprive me not of your esteem: I am the more to be pitied; for, notwithstanding the violence of a passion, revived at the sight of him who first inspired it, you shall see me put in execution with the greatest courage what I have undertaken to perform.'

The steward, expected by Lindamine, entered the room just as she had done speaking; she let him know the uneasiness she was under with respect to Belizai; after acquainting him with her design of retiring to a monastery. We all agreed, that in order to elude her lover's vigilance, which doubtless would be extraordinary at this juncture, she and I should change bed-chambers; that early in the morning, Lindamine should set out first in Saint Fal's chaise,

the postilion being ordered to wait our coming at a place appointed about six leagues distant. I flattered myself that the count would make no difficulty to assist in so warrantable a design. In the preceding agitations a considerable time was spent, and the clock struck ten, without my hearing any tidings of Saint Fal. I grew very uneasy; as I informed his valet de chambre, not dissembling that his indifference on this occasion very ill became him. He was ashamed of it, and taking a guide with him, went to seek his master. What made me the more apprehensive lest any accident might have befallen the count, was my having very innocently given occasion to it, being convinced that his motive of going out was to take off all appearance of constraint on my liberty; not but I was satisfied his only aim was to please me, and I saw plainly he was in love. I did not see any obligation of taking upon me to resent a passion no ways encouraged or approved of on my side. We cannot controul our sentiments, but may always regulate our manner of expressing them; and where a woman has by her merit created a passion in a man of strict honour, I really think, even at this day, when he has declared himself an admirer, and she, on her part, has in a polite manner sincerely assured him that she is otherwise engaged, or that her duty or affections are incompatible with any such declaration, she ought not to pride herself in a scrupulous nicety of avoiding his company, provided she does not give him opportunities. An affected behaviour soon degenerates into mere preciseness, and daily experience convinces us, that coquettes and abandoned women frequently lie hid under the mask of hypocrisy. But to return, before a subject of this kind carries us too far out of the way.

Lindamine, desirous of setting out very early for the reason above mentioned, after her usual collation went to bed in the manner we had agreed on. I sent for the postilion who belonged to the Count De Saint Fal, and ordered the chaise to be ready at day-break. The great deference paid me by the count, of which his servants were eye-witnesses, was without doubt the reason of the postilion's readily receiving my orders. Lindamine and I bid each other adieu with great regret: that amiable young creature was truly deserving of a singular

singular esteem, and had our acquaintance been of a longer date, this farewell would have cost me very dear. I begged very earnestly to hear from her as soon as I should be able to send proper directions. She promised to comply so well with my request, as might perhaps make me repent of allowing her that liberty.

Ten, eleven, twelve o'clock came, but no count appeared. The landlady, with all her entreaty, could not persuade me to go to bed without knowing the reasons of this unexpected absence; all she could compass was to prevail on me to eat a mouthful. Sitting down to table, I heard a horse stop at the door; immediately the landlady called from the bottom of the stairs, that I might sup in peace, for that a courier brought me news of the count. In consequence of this, up comes a servant booted, of whom I hastily enquired for M. De Saint Fal; his answer was, that he left him about ten leagues off, having rid post with him so far. Astonished at what I heard, I questioned the servant again. He replied, putting a letter into my hand, that there I should find a better information than any he could give me. I opened the letter with great eagerness, and read to my great surprize as follows.

THE COUNT DE SAINT FAL'S LETTER TO JENNY.

I Have sent you an express, Mademoiselle, being persuaded you must be under the greatest uneasiness at my departure, as well as my absence: I made a secret of it to you, being confident I should return before you could perceive either the one or the other. It would be the greatest mortification to me, if you should put any other construction upon my journey.

My design was to prepare a convenient lodging for you till you were happily settled, as your great merit justly deserves: but when I arrived at S. G. which I thought a more proper place for you than any other, judge how I was surprized to find there the Marquis De L. V. whom I then thought to have been in Lorraine. My cousin was not less astonished to meet me: his pale face and confused behaviour gave me room to think he

suspected the occasion of my journey. You shall know to-morrow, Madam, the reasons that hindered me from dealing sincerely with him. I know you have so much sense, I dare lay a wager you partly guess my motive.

I did not well know what conduct to observe with the marquis; I would willingly have avoided such an interview, and the questions he put to me; but having always been so very intimate, I could not excuse myself from supping with him. Our discourse turned upon indifferent matters: though he was twenty times upon the point of speaking of his charming Jenny, still he contained himself, which confirmed me more and more in his mistrust of me. But to what purpose do I any longer entertain you concerning the marquis; can one pretend to make one's court at the expence of the heart? Forgive this expression, it escaped me; I too much fear it may offend you. I am silent, and will be more circumspect for the future: the more easily to obtain my pardon, I will begin again to talk to you of my amiable kinsman.

Nothing fetters conversation more than distrust. The marquis and I had no sooner supped, but we parted under different pretences. My cousin's was, that he must ride post back again to Pont à Mousson, pretending to me that he was only come to court, in hopes that, as his affair lay dormant, he might appear again, but that some of his friends had given him to understand, it was proper for him to be absent a little longer, till it was quite forgot. What do you think of me, charming Jenny, for not believing him? I was not to be imposed upon with this pretext. I imagined (and I have now reason to believe myself not mistaken) it had either taken air, or that he had been informed of his father's intentions; that my cousin was in pursuit of you, and that the discourse I have just now related to you, was only designed to prevent my suspecting his real motives. I disssembled in my turn; and we took leave with great coolness. He went away. That I might know the truth, I had him followed at some distance by a man on horseback. This emissary is just returned, with word that the marquis was come into the town by another

other gate; which left me no farther room to doubt of his designs. Such as they are, I thought it was best to act with prudence. Instead of coming back to join you, I set out for the court. If he has me watched in his turn, he will know, that I have not deceived him; and if it be true, that he suspects me to act in concert with his father, the conduct I pursue will convince him of the contrary.

‘It is your business, Mademoiselle, to determine which way to act. If I may give my advice, in the disposition I am in of always serving you, it would be proper for you to meet me to-morrow at Versailles. I shall take care to have an apartment ready for you, where you shall be received under a name that shall secure you from all enquiries. You will find a man in the Long Walk, who will watch your coming by, and conduct you where you are to alight. Let not this place give you any disquiet; the marquis’s father is at his country-seat, and little suspects how ill I comply with his orders and designs. When you are at court I shall see you, and we will consult together how I am to proceed with my uncle, whether he returns or makes a longer stay at his estate. Happen what will, in me you shall always find a sincere friend, who will secretly ward off all assaults that may be made against you. Please to do me the honour to let me know your positive resolutions. The person who is the bearer of this has orders to bring me your answer, and knows where to find me. I am, with much more than esteem, Mademoiselle, your most humble, &c.

‘DE SAINT FAL.

‘P. S. You will please to remember, dear Jenny, that it is of the utmost consequence to your interest, in the present situation of your affairs, by all means to avoid the marquis.’

I read this letter several times over without being able to come to a resolution. What pleased me most was, the fresh instances the marquis gave of his passion for me. I could not help being sensibly touched with the kind regard he shewed me, and my heart was but too well pleased to see the pains he took in seeing me. This natural consequence

I drew from it, that since I was so sincerely beloved by him, I need give myself no disquiet for what might happen; or, at least, in case of any accident, I had a protector to depend on, who would support me against the attacks of adverse fortune.

Notwithstanding the pleasure I took in these reflections, I could not but approve of M. De Saint Fal’s conduct, though I made no doubt but love and jealousy had the greatest share in it; but the polite and engaging manner in which this new lover behaved, made me quite easy. However that might be, I was just giving full scope to an ample train of reflections; but calling to mind that the case required a positive answer, I restrained my thoughts to the point in view, what was to be done. This gave me no small uneasiness. Once I thought of taking the advantage of the count’s absence, and throwing myself into the arms of my relations; but that vanity I have mentioned elsewhere, which disdained the meanness of my birth; the notion of what people would say; love, if you please; the hopes of a charming and much desired fortune; all these things too strongly offered themselves to my imagination, and entirely banished that design. Fearing even this virtuous disposition might influence me, I wrote instantly to M. De Saint Fal, and informed him, that I relied so much on his honour as to be entirely guided by him; that I would be at Versailles as he desired, where I depended upon the continuance of his goodness to me.

The express was scarce out of sight, when I repented of what I had done. ‘Ah, my God!’ said I to myself, ‘why did I not pursue my first design? What was I thinking of, when I chose to come to a place where my lover’s father has so much interest? If my unlucky stars still prevail so as to discover me, who will protect me from his just resentment? Will he not have reason to think I come to insult him in his own house? If I should even have the good fortune to be concealed from this provoked parent, can I avoid being known by his son? Love will be his guide; and were I to suppose otherwise, should I not be weak enough to save him the trouble? Heavens! what have I done?’ continued I; ‘if none of these inconveniencies were to happen, what motive have I to persuade

‘suade myself that Saint Fal will always behave with the moderation he now prudently puts on? Artful, perhaps dissembling, in his addresses, does he not disguise himself, the better to bring me to his purpose? Has he not sufficiently explained himself already in his letter? Without doubt,’ said I crying, ‘I am myself but too much the cause of all that has happened to me. Less vanity, less love, had long ago prevented all these vexations, that have so fatally pursued me ever since I left our humble cottage. That shame which has hitherto opposed itself to a lawful and proper conduct, would by this time have been overcome: I should now have been secure in the arms of my mother; a country girl, it is true, but far more charming in my virtue than when decked in all the gaudy trappings with which this age is so apt to dazzle.’ Part of the night was passed in this disquiet of mind. A sudden thought that struck me, made me rise in haste: remembering the hour drew near when the pilgrim was to go away, I lighted a candle, and in spite of my fears, ventured to Lindamine’s chamber. The regard with which Madame De G—— had honoured me, encouraged my having recourse to it on the present occasion; flattering myself that this generous person, moved with the new hazards to which my virtue was again exposed, would receive me into her arms, and approve my flight; or, at least, if for the same reasons as before she durst not keep me, she would use her credit to have me admitted into the monastery from whence I came. ‘I shall find,’ said I, ‘my sincere friend Saint Agnes again; and Lindamine, whose misfortunes have engaged my tender friendship, will be a great increase of my comfort: we will join all three of us our distresses, and there I will quietly wait the end of my misfortunes or life.’ These new projects fortified my troubled mind. I entered the pilgrim’s chamber to acquaint her with my resolution: she was just ready to go, but the force she put upon herself in quitting for ever a beloved admirer manifestly appeared in her face by her sorrow and tears. The condition in which I found her, made me forget my own afflictions in order to comfort her: she confessed that my presence restored

all her resolution, which was not a little shaken at the thoughts of a convent, and her lover’s being so near; but how great was her joy to hear I intended to accompany her! This assurance dried up her tears; a mild serenity succeeded her uneasiness: she embraced me in her transport, and offered to divide with me all she had remaining of her fortune, or at least to pay what would be necessary for my admission into a religious house, if I were so disposed. I made my acknowledgments for this her goodness, but I could not help saying with a smile, that I thought the affair too serious to be determined so suddenly. She approved of my sincerity, and added with a deep sigh, that in the condition she was, I must not regard her decision.

In the meanwhile, word was brought that the chaise was ready, and we were upon the point of going. My virtue, satisfied with the resolution I had taken, gave me such an inward tranquillity, as to silence the voice of love. Lindamine was preparing to follow me, muffled up for fear of meeting Belizai: but this extraordinary lover, who had only feigned to comply with his mistress’s desires, the better to prevent her distrust, had been upon the watch all night, and found out our projects, (as he soon owned to us) having overheard all we said. In fine, we were opening the door to go away, when he appeared all of a sudden. ‘Pardon my despair, dear Lindamine,’ cried he, stopping our passage, ‘I had rather suffer death than consent to your unjust designs; will you, then, leave me, and withdraw yourself from the legitimate rights I have over you?’ — ‘Rights!’ cried the pilgrim very resolutely. ‘Ah, my God! of what nature are they? Ought you not to blush? Do you expect to prevail because you have taken such a thing into your head? Would you resemble those, who, arrogating a power to themselves which they have not, think they need but speak and the matter is done? As for my part, Sir, I am not of that opinion,’ continued Lindamine. ‘You will be so good, if you please—’ ‘To return to your apartment,’ replied Belizai, growing calmer, and lowering his voice. ‘Ah! I ask your pardon, young lady, for thus opposing your designs, but I will perish before I let you go without me.’ During this gentle expostulation,

lation, Belizai would have seized the pilgrim's hand to oblige her to go in again; but this amiable young creature returned of her own accord, rather than suffer such violence. 'Ah! how wretched am I!' cried she, throwing herself into an arm-chair; 'those who ought to behave with respect become my tyrants! I submit. O, my God,' continued she, shedding tears, 'you cannot humble me too much; in you I place my hope, founded on the purity of my intentions!' Having pronounced these words she was silent. 'I leave you, Mademoiselle,' says Belizai, in a respectful voice; 'I am going to pray that Heaven which you invoke, to free your mind from this agitation. As soon as you give me any marks of it, you shall find me resigned; but, without that, I swear solemnly, I had rather suffer death than you should engage in any rash enterprize. If love has no greater sway in your heart, at least let honour reign in its place. This is saying enough,' added Belizai: 'you understand me; and I am persuaded you will make suitable reflections thereon.' Making a profound bow he retired, giving me such a look as sufficiently explained his resentment, though I pretended not to observe it.

Lindamine, who was pretty warm in her temper, poured out her soul in the most cruel and bitter complaints as soon as her lover had left us. After having given free passage to her grief, she declared, that Heaven had given her grace to lay aside all affection for her unworthy lover; that she was by so much the more comforted, as the state she was upon embracing required a heart exempted from all solicitude; that this cure would enable her to comply with her duty much more cheerfully than she could have expected, if it were not for this happy change Heaven had wrought, to which the ill behaviour of her lover certainly contributed. I did all I could to strengthen her in these good dispositions, representing to her, at the same time, the just ground there was to fear lest Belizai should throw new obstacles in her way. This made her thoughtful for a few moments; then earnestly addressing herself to me, she said she had contrived means to guard against all Belizai's attacks. She begged of me to get into the chaise that waited for us, to leave

the inn, pretending to go away alone out of the village, and to wait for her at a small distance behind a little chapel she described, assuring me she would find means to come and join me, and deliver herself from Belizai. We were very private in laying this design, for fear of being overheard. I acquiesced to all she required, and in order to give the thing an air of probability, I took leave of her aloud; and Lindamine, as she conducted me to her chamber-door, ordered one of the servants, in a loud voice, to bid Belizai come up.

I was getting into the chaise to execute our intended project, when Saint Fal's valet de chambre drew near me, and asked respectfully enough what was my design, and where I was going. Not being prepared for this question, I found myself very much at a loss, and did not know what answer to make. 'That is to say, Mademoiselle,' added he, seeing me struck, 'the departure of your pilgrim is only a pretence of yours, in order to take the advantage of my master's absence; and make your escape. The thought was not amiss, and I was very lucky in watching you, or I should have made a fine figure in this adventure. I have no orders, it is true,' continued the old servant, 'to lay any restraint on you, but I think myself obliged at least to represent, that you ought not to go from hence without my master's knowledge. The civilities he has shewn you require this. As for my part, I cannot consent that you should make use of my master's chaise, unless I have his positive orders for it.'

The postilion, who was ready to set out, upon hearing this discourse got down, and took off the horses. Finding myself at such a nonplus, I thought of making a confidant of the valet de chambre, and telling him my motive; but he had so forbidding an air, and always shewed so great a prejudice against me, that I durst not let him into the affair. This consideration carried me in again, blushing and full of the greatest uneasiness.

I knew not what resolution to take. The fear of finding Belizai and Lindamine, and rendering her more suspected by my unlooked-for return, led me to my chamber. In reflecting on what had passed, I saw nothing but obstacles on all sides. It was in my power

to go to Versailles, I had the master's leave, his letter, and the journey diminished my uneasiness; but the more I thought of it, the more repugnant it was to my virtue. I had not forgot what Madame De G—— had told me concerning a woman who is under her protector's roof, nor the snare I had so narrowly escaped when her husband hired an apartment for me. Besides, I reflected with what facility Monsieur Saint Fal had changed his sentiments in my favour, after having shewn himself the first day so strict an observer of the orders given him by my lover's father: nevertheless, instead of conducting me to a convent pursuant to the cruel orders he had received, he became my friend, betrayed the trust his uncle placed in him, offered to keep me, (for any other expression would be far fetched) was carrying me into a country unknown to me, where I had neither friend or relation. I could not but easily foresee I was going again to be overwhelmed with adventures.

I allow these reflections should have been made sooner; but admitting that, what could I do? Was it in my power to chuse? All things considered, ought I not, on the contrary, to bless the happy lot which bestowed on me a *je-ne-sçai-quoy*, that disarmed those who were destined to be my persecutors? Women of a certain turn, when they read this passage, will say very superciliously, 'You ought, Miss Jenny, to have suffered yourself to have been conducted to a convent, instead of affecting so many airs with the men; or not to have set forth in such a pompous style your virtue's being so much exposed. After all, would you not have been very happy when maintained in a monastery? What could you expect better?'

The remark is, doubtless, very just; but I must ask these severe ladies, if, when girls, they committed no faults. If they vouchsafe to satisfy me upon this article, I will give them a fuller answer. In the mean time, I beg they would please to content themselves with the short reflections which presented themselves in the exigency I just now described.

My chamber was under that of Lindamine: I had left the door upon the jar, without knowing why. Sitting on my bed's foot, quite buried in thought, I heard Belizai coming down. I knew him by his voice. As soon as he was

gone by, I went immediately up to the pilgrim. She was greatly surprized to see me again: I gave her an account of what had happened. 'That signifies nothing,' replied she; 'luckily my chaise is not yet gone: it will be easy to get over this new obstacle; would to God it were as easy to get rid of Belizai! I have just now undergone the most dangerous attack from him, it not being in my power to make him hear reason. I must confess, my dear friend, nothing but absence can make my virtue triumph: it was twenty times upon the point of yielding; neither would you have been surprized, had you been present at the assaults I have sustained. This wretched lover threw himself at my feet, confessed his guilt, wept, sighed, would even have made away with himself. Ah, Jenny! how much is a man who is not disagreeable to be dreaded on such an occasion! an occasion which young women, who are not desirous of throwing themselves away, ought to shun as the most dangerous rock! But for Heaven, to which I interiorly addressed myself, I could never have sustained this conflict without fresh wounds: the Divine Grace preserved me against my natural frailty; my mind, elevated by a superior power, safely conducted me along this thorny path. I pretended the tears of Belizai had softened me, and promised not to go away without him. He believed it, because one is apt to do so in things we wish for. In the meanwhile, I imagine the thoughts of your absence does not a little contribute to the making him easy, for he is afraid of you, and suspects your having suggested to me the design of leaving him. Does he know any thing of your return?' continued Lindamine. 'If that were the case, he would certainly resume his former inquietudes.'

The pilgrim seemed easy when I assured her, that her lover was not acquainted with my coming back; nor was there any reason to think he would be inquisitive about it. 'Things being thus,' replied Lindamine, 'you must return to your chamber, and avoid all intercourse with me this day. You must pretend to be taken ill, and artfully make those believe who wait upon you, that your indisposition was

‘the hindrance of your journey; to the end that, if Belizai should hear of your being in the house, it may give him no distrust. The best of it is, that, by what you say, they do not pretend to lay any restraint upon your liberty, but only objected against your taking the chaise. Mine, as I told you, removes the difficulty at once. I acquainted Belizai, that before I begin so long a journey as I have promised to take with him, my servant must go to a neighbouring town to provide me several necessaries. Before he sets out, I shall entrust him to order affairs as follows. He shall go in my chaise, and return again at night to wait for us at the end of this village: the remaining part of the day I will spend with Belizai, the better to amuse him. Let us join in prayer, and implore the blessing of Heaven on our design. It is virtue directs us, and from thence I draw a favourable omen.’ This discourse revived me, as I thought the project well enough concerted. Notwithstanding, I represented to the pilgrim the difficulty I apprehended of going off in the night without being observed; but she assured me her steward would provide against it. After mutual embraces we parted.

I was no sooner in my chamber but I feigned myself out of order. Having sent for Saint Fal’s valet de chambre, I endeavoured to remove any umbrage he might take at what had passed, and the confusion I betrayed; fearing, with some reason, lest from thence he should think proper to acquaint his master, that I had a mind to make my escape. Besides, I could not help thinking that good manners required I should inform M. De Saint Fal, before I left him, what my motives were for so doing, since he had behaved so handsomely in my regard.

In order to leave the valet de chambre no room to suspect any thing, I shewed him the count’s letter, and asked if he knew the hand. Being answered in the affirmative, I told him I could plead a very good excuse for not being that day at Versailles. ‘You know very well,’ said I, slyly, ‘I was going, but you thought fit to stop me.’—‘Who, I, Madam!’ cried he, interrupting me, and confounded at what he heard; ‘I should be very sorry to have done it. My reason for obstructing your jour-

ney, was the apprehension I had of your making an escape. Had you mentioned the least syllable of your design, you would have been there before this.’—‘I did not imagine,’ replied I, very coldly, ‘that your leave was requisite. Besides, I was so surprized at your presumption, that I could not speak, nor have I as yet recovered myself. I sent for you, to inform you of this, having no design to do you a prejudice; but you must be sensible that I cannot avoid letting your master know the reason of my not setting out, or you may do it yourself. I leave it to your choice, as well as my going to-morrow at day-break to Versailles; for since you have given me to understand, that in your master’s absence I am to obey your orders, I shall be careful not to take any resolution for the future without consulting you.’

All this was uttered with an air so very natural, as quite stunned the poor valet de chambre. It is likely he knew his master’s temper, and dreaded his anger in case I should give him the same detail of the affair. Besides, he was not ignorant of the deference M. De Saint Fal paid to me; and, as I seemed to resent the usage I had received, he apprehended his master might do the same. Upon this, he asked a thousand pardons in order to appease me, acknowledging his fault, and begged of me to set out that moment, being ready, as he said, to receive my commands, and remove all occasions of offence. Pleased to find my artifice had succeeded, I grew more calm, and told him my indisposition would not allow me to go that day, but that he should hold himself in readiness for the next morning. I would then have had him retire, but he refused to leave my chamber till I had pardoned his ill manners, as he termed it. In order to rid myself of him, I did more; I promised to say nothing of what had passed to his master. The valet de chambre seemed mighty well satisfied with this assurance, and told me, that as we were not very far from Versailles, he would go thither himself to prevent his master’s being uneasy at my not coming. He added, he would have sent another on this errand, but that he was desirous of shewing the entire confidence he had in me, and that he was not placed as a spy over me. I thought proper, to avoid

avoid all suspicion, to insist on his sending the postilion; but he alledged that the boy, not having been long in his master's service, might possibly make some blunder, very contrary to the secrecy his master had prescribed. I acquiesced to this obstinacy, as I called it, overjoyed within myself to be free from this watchful Argus, whom I dreaded as much as Lindamine could Belizai. The valet de chambre set out, and I congratulated myself on my dexterity in getting out of this scrape. It is certain, evasions cost women very little, and therefore woe to those lovers and husbands who have to deal with such as are not sincerely virtuous; all their skill and foresight can never secure them from being imposed on, of which every day furnishes but too many instances.

Thus far every thing went well; when about eight in the evening, hearing some horses stop at the inn, I looked hastily out of the window, fearing lest any fresh obstacle might thwart our designs. My life hitherto had been so much exposed to vexations, that I imagined each day must necessarily produce instances of my being disappointed in every thing I undertook: a train of misfortunes naturally produces a continual apprehension. As I had heard the marquis was in the neighbourhood, I began to think he might be arrived; I dare not say I was displeased: is it possible one should, after so long an absence of a person beloved? 'Perhaps,' said I to myself, 'the Count De Saint Fal, uneasy at my not complying with his eager appointment, is come to fetch me.' This perplexity occasioned my looking out a second time. By the light of the torches, carried by two servants, I discerned a tall man getting out of the coach: he seemed something in years, with a venerable aspect; and, by his numerous retinue, to be a person of great quality. Before he entered the inn, he cast his eyes towards me, and even stopped his attendants, that he might have the better view. Not accustomed to be thus ogled, I drew in. I fancied he looked something sweet upon me, and it was easy to discover he did not think me disagreeable. A small share of beauty suffices to inspire such a thought into most women; and let their way of thinking be never so just, if they deal sincerely, they must not deny but vanity and self-

conceit furnish one half of their reflections.

The notion I had that Lindamine would not fail of coming to inform me of her setting out, prevailed upon me to leave my door half open. The agitations of my mind, rather than what I eat at supper, had inclined me to sleep in an arm-chair, though I was often disturbed from the continual expectation of seeing the pilgrim; but how was I surprized at last to see two men standing by me, one of whom I knew to be the person I had seen get out of the coach. The sudden emotion, occasioned by their unexpected presence, no doubt betrayed some apprehension. 'I beg, Mademoiselle,' said the tall gentleman, whom I took to be the master, 'you would not be frightened; I little thought of giving any occasion to it, or of disturbing your repose, when, through a mistake, I came into your apartment instead of my own: perceiving my error, I was upon the point of retiring, but must confess I was so surprized to see such a beautiful creature, that, old as I am, I could not deny myself the pleasure of gazing a while. So many charms cannot be destitute of sufficient sweetness of temper to excuse what has happened; and I hope such an attracting motive will plead my pardon. No age is secure from the force of beauty; and yours, in particular, is too irresistible not to occasion many such adventures.' Any one will easily guess, both the harangue and the visit afforded me sufficient subject of admiration; but it will certainly be thought very extraordinary, that both the one and the other pleased me not a little: something, I knew not what, delighted me. The old gentleman's presence, as much a stranger as he was to me, was highly agreeable: whilst he spoke, I could not help considering his person with a secret pleasure; and when he had done, I returned his compliments in a polite manner; I even sought, I remember, to make myself as agreeable as possible, without knowing the reason. The stranger was so transported at the complaisance of my answer and behaviour, that, folding his arms together, 'Is it possible,' he cried, 'that so much wit and beauty should be united! She has certainly been extremely well educated! Happy man,

‘whoever he is, to possess such a treasure of good sense! Who would have imagined, Forfan,’ continued he, turning his eyes to a man on whose shoulder he leaned, ‘that at my years I could have expected so favourable a reception? A great proof of the just way of thinking this young lady possesses.’—‘Take care, Sir,’ replied I very modestly, ‘lest your encomiums inspire a vanity prejudicial to that merit you are pleased to extol; but if, as you seem to say, there is any in overlooking age and personal advantages, I must needs own I have so much good sense, as to consider only character and worth in men; and, were I to make a choice, such qualifications would fix it, preferably to those of a more alluring nature.’

The old gentleman extolled this maxim to the skies, embellishing it with all that wit could possibly invent. His facility in expressing himself, and the polite language he employed, most agreeably engaged my attention; this he perceived, and from thence took a fresh occasion of praising my understanding.

‘It is very evident, Sir,’ replied I, ‘yours is of such a turn, that a young person may not only be very safe in your company, but considerably improve herself when thus happy in enjoying so solid and elegant a conversation.’—‘Have you really sworn, then,’ cried the old gentleman, transported, ‘to make me forget my age, and the dictates of reason? As old as I am, I know my own weakness; my heart is on the point of falling a victim to your youth and beauty: why must you call the perfections of your mind to compleat the conquest? Do not cast down your eyes, thou loveliest creature I ever beheld! nor give yourself any uneasiness,’ continued he, seeing me a little discomposed at this declaration: ‘though I should even fancy myself young again, you have nothing to fear from the transports you inspire, blended with so much respect as they are, and your chaste beauties will sufficiently curb the sallies of an irregular passion. Are you not, Forfan, of my opinion,’ continued the stranger; ‘and though older than myself, do not you admire her innocent and unaffected charms?’

In the beginning of this interview I had offered chairs, but the stranger had

obliged me to sit down again, and his attendant brought him an arm-chair, placing himself on one side. So many compliments heaped upon me during this conversation had given me a colour no way to my disadvantage; the candle-light, too, had contributed to promote so many fine speeches. Whatever reasons I might have for dispatching this visit, it was so very agreeable to me, that I even furnished occasions of prolonging it as much as possible; certainly my mind foreboded something from it.

Our conversation soon turned on those talents which are thought to adorn merit. The stranger, who seemed fond of musick, enquired if, among my other qualifications, I practised singing: this occasioned some little excuses, a folly usual with performers. My voice was good; and, as I have already hinted, I had made some progress in musick. As we are all fond of pleasing in as many different ways as possible, I sung an air, the words of which were the marquis’s: it was his favourite song, as he assured me; this was more than sufficient to make me remember it.

I.

MY joys depend on her alone,
Whose beauty fires my ravish’d
breast;

Laid at her feet, if she but own

I touch her heart, ’tis then I’m blest’d.

II.

Chaste coynefs never can alarm,
Or shake a constant, noble mind;
Rigid virtue will always charm
A soul from loose desire refin’d.

After passing very great compliments on my performance, the stranger turning to him who stood by; ‘I could even pardon,’ says he, ‘the young spark we were talking of, had he been enamoured with one any way comparable to this young lady in her education, wit, politeness, and fine talents; one might venture to say birth too; nay, I would have even approved of his passion: but to run after a sorry creature, from a dunghill, a country girl; in fine, the very reverse of what I have mentioned; to suffer himself to be so far infatuated as to entangle himself in one troublesome affair after another; disoblige his parents, and trample on the most essential duties in life, there can be no excuse. Nobody can have a greater compassion than myself

myself for the follies of youth. I am sensible, were I in his place, I should run all hazards for such a lovely creature as this; but to—' 'Ah, my Lord Marquis!' cried Forfan, interrupting him, 'what is it you say? The near concern you have in this affair, makes you lay down a wrong principle. I need not tell you that Love is blind, and consequently will fancy in it's object all those charms you have found here to be real.'—'Though your maxim,' replied the nobleman, 'be something romantick, I agree it has it's weight; but I deny that to be the case in dispute: there are some faults prejudice itself cannot overlook. The girl I am speaking of has not the least resemblance of this young lady. That wench is a proud, haughty vagabond; and as she knows the power she has over our acquaintance, has engaged him hitherto in so many extravagancies, that the good qualities every one allowed him formerly to be master of are all buried in oblivion. It is true, by this time she is severely punished, and must hereafter pay very dear for all the vexation she has brought upon her admirer's friends; but still, she can never repair the mischief that's done, or atone for the disobedience of a son to his father. You, Forfan,' continued the nobleman very earnestly, 'was one of the first to represent these things to me in a proper light, and pointed out the only remedy left, for which I shall ever acknowledge myself obliged.'

The nobleman no sooner began to take in pieces the poor country girl, but I found myself struck to the heart. Nothing contributes so much as our interest to make us sharp-sighted. The exact resemblance between this history, cruelly mangled as it was, and my own; the reflections made upon it; the earnestness, not to say indignation, with which this nobleman spoke of the lover concerned; all put together, left me no room to doubt of my acting the second personage in this notable scene. 'Good God!' said I to myself, quite confounded with the thought, 'am I at last fallen into the hands of my lover's father!' I was ready to sink at the apprehension; but dear liberty, which lay at stake, and certainly nothing else could have supported me, came to my assistance, and gave me such command over

myself, as to elude the danger of being discovered. Not a soul in the house knowing me, I did not despair of getting over this difficulty.

As these reflections took up some little time, the old marquis imagined, from my silence, that the subject of this discourse did not affect me sufficiently to engage me in it; upon this, changing the conversation, he enquired how far I might be from home, and whether I should continue my journey the next day. I answered with great indifference, that I was accompanying a relation to a monastery. This put him upon enquiring if the monastery was near Versailles; and added, that if so, he would wait on me thither. This gave occasion to his informing me, that he was returning from his country-seat, and was obliged to stop at the inn, for that his servants, who were to meet him with fresh horses, not expecting him till the next day, had disappointed him; that he waited their coming, having sent for them. He added, in a very gallant manner, that though he had been highly provoked at their negligence, he should be obliged to pardon them, as it procured him the pleasure of my acquaintance; and therefore he ought not to regret the loss of the time they had occasioned in his affairs, since it was employed in paying his respects to me. I answered to what he said in a polite manner; and found, by the rest of his discourse, that I was not in any danger of being discovered. Encouraged by this, I began to think of pleading my own cause, if any opportunity presented itself.

My earnest desire of introducing the subject again, made me take the advantage of the great regard he still shewed me. 'I am apt to imagine, my lord marquis,' said I, withdrawing one of my hands he was going to seize, 'that you are easily prejudiced; if the young gentleman you mentioned, and whose affair you seem to take so much to heart, be as amorous as yourself, you ought not to be surprized at his falling in love with a person, perhaps much more amiable than me.'—'Why so, Mademoiselle?' cried the old marquis, piqued at what I said: 'there is a wide difference between taking a liking to a person, and falling in love.'—'The engagements,' said I, 'of one at the age I suppose the gentleman to be for whom you are so concerned, especially

cially with a country girl, are not, in all probability, of any great moment; besides, her condition being so much beneath him, I am inclined to think her relations, and not his, have the most reason to be concerned for the consequences.'—'Indeed,' replied the old marquis very positively, 'I do not believe my son will be fool enough to marry her.'—'How, my lord!' cried I, with a feigned air of astonishment; 'is it your son we have been talking of all this while?'—'Well, Mademoiselle,' continued the marquis in some confusion, 'it is out, and I shall not be at the trouble of recalling it: besides, his passion is grown so notorious, that it would be in vain to endeavour to keep it secret.'—'If that be the case,' replied I, 'you have some reason to complain; though, in reality, you hazard nothing in the main; since, as you say, she is a country girl, and consequently, with all her beauty, can never be so vain as to pretend to the honour of your alliance.'—'I am not able,' replied the marquis, 'to discover all the views she may have in what she does; but this you may depend on, if she has as much sense as several pretend she is mistress of, she will lead my son many a dance, considering the honour and constancy on which he values himself.'—'Nay, then, indeed,' replied I, with an air of great simplicity, 'you are certainly in the right to break off the correspondence between these two lovers.'—'You are not,' said he, 'the only one that approves of my conduct in this particular. I expect, with great impatience, to hear every moment of the slut's being secured.'—'How!' said I, interrupting him; 'have you that to do still?'—'In all probability,' replied he, 'she must be safe in a monastery by this time, where I have taken care she shall meet with a proper reception. I was yesterday to have had an account of what has been done: how I come to be so disappointed I cannot imagine, unless our sly baggage has deluded my nephew likewise, whom I entrusted with the commission; but when I consider his known discretion, and the little regard he has for the fair-sex, I think there is nothing of that kind to be feared; though one moment often suffices to work an entire change; be-

sides, I have heard of so many of her tricks and exploits, that it is not impossible but she may have given us the slip.'

This last harangue humbled me to such a degree, that I was on the point of throwing off the mask, and vindicating myself. No one can be so very insensible as not to be moved, when they hear themselves thus torn in pieces. Without the motives which may be easily guessed, I could never have laid so great a restraint on myself: a moment's thought recovered me. 'But, good God, Sir, you surprize me!' said I, 'and give me a very indifferent opinion of your son. Is it possible that a person of his birth, should thus abandon himself to so sorry a creature as you have described, notwithstanding the old proverb, that Love is blind. This, I conceive, may hold good with respect to the body, but certainly can be of no force in regard of the mind; at least, I do not comprehend how any man of sense can omit weighing, with great attention, the good or bad character of the person beloved: possibly your son, my lord, may have discovered in her something at least worthy of esteem.'—'Your remark,' replied he, 'is very just; and if I had not been assured of the vile dispositions of this hussy, I should have concluded, as you do, that the violent passion she created in my son, must have been heightened by the influence of some commendable turn of mind; but there is no likelihood of this, where experience shews us that she has entangled her admirer in several broils, disconcerted his affairs, and set him at variance with his father: this, you must allow, is an abominable character, and can never be sufficiently condemned.'—'I am of your opinion, my lord,' continued I; 'but give me leave to ask you one question, if this discourse is not grown tedious.'—'Not in the least,' replied the marquis in a milder tone: 'as many as you please; I take a singular pleasure in hearing you.' For the better understanding this notable dialogue, it must be observed, that every time the marquis spoke of me under the name of country girl, he expressed himself with an air of contempt and indignation: his action was addressed to me, but his eyes were fixed on his gentleman, who stood by,

by, and only answered with nods and shrugs, approving of every thing his master said; but whenever I spoke, the marquis grew calmer, was agreeable and complaisant, Forsan continuing his dumb shew, and dividing his silent approbations between us.

'What I would fain know,' said I to the marquis, looking him steadily in the face, 'is, whether you have ever seen your son's mistress; I mean, the country girl we have been talking of; I specify her, because he may have several; a thing not unusual, they say, with young noblemen at present.'—'No, fair lady,' answered the marquis, 'I never saw her; but those who are acquainted with her, have drawn her picture to the life for me; particularly a certain person, daughter to the lord of her village, who has given me a thorough insight into her designs; and who has reason, from what her family has suffered on the girl's account, bitterly to regret the charitable protection that was there granted her. What I tell you,' continued the marquis, growing peevish with the remembrance of what had happened, 'are facts, and of that consequence too, as I had like to have cost me my son.'—'How, my lord!' cried I, equally sharing the bitter remembrance, 'these are matters of moment, indeed, and prove she is highly to blame as to what has happened; but as to the character they have given of her, how do you know but they may have very cogent motives for imposing on you?'—'No, not the least,' answered the marquis. 'It is true, your objection would be of some force where there is a rival, or one of equal rank, but—' 'Have a care, my lord,' I cried, interrupting him in my turn; 'Love, who is at the bottom of all this affair, is a great leveller: the lady who has thus prejudiced you against the country lass, perhaps is young; your son is, doubtless, a very amiable person; where would be the wonder, if she really has an affection for him? Perhaps, not being able to bear a rival so much her inferior, she has taken this opportunity of punishing her for pretending to a heart she is desirous of securing to herself. I have heard of such adventures before; and why may not this be of the same nature?'—'So, then,' replied the marquis, 'we must

believe in romances, where we find many such ridiculous instances, more apt to corrupt the mind than inform it, as some will pretend: but put the case, it were really as you say, these effects would never have followed; all the world will tell you the same; and though they were all of your opinion, and would endeavour to convince me, it would be in vain, for I never act but upon sure grounds.'

This was uttered with so much sourness, that I heartily repented my having occasioned the discourse: I endeavoured artfully to introduce another topick; but he was too vehement, and too much bent upon the subject. 'Had my son, indeed,' continued he, 'fallen in love with a person of equal merit with yourself, I would not have interfered: as a father, I might have reflected on the consequences of such an engagement, but I could not have condemned his passion, being very sensible that there are some objects morally impossible to be resisted. I myself, notwithstanding my age, cannot answer how far I might be carried by those charms of yours, were I much longer exposed to them. I am even sensible already,' continued the marquis very amorously, 'that I have gazed on you too long for my own happiness, and that——' 'Alas, my lord,' cried I, interrupting him, hurried on by my resentment, and without considering what I was going to say, 'how can you thus address me, after speaking your mind so freely in my regard? Is it possible, that knowing me so well, and having this very moment given me such convincing proofs of your indignation——' Here I stopped short, perceiving too late my indiscretion. I would have given the world to have had it in my power to recal my words.

The marquis, astonished at what I said, stared upon Forsan; then, turning towards me, he eyed me from head to foot: notwithstanding, happily for me, he had not the least suspicion in my regard. 'What do you intend to say, Mademoiselle; what proofs do you mean? Could I mistake, or might you have taken amiss—It cannot be! I looked upon you as a lady deserving respect, and still I think I am not mistaken.'

These questions pressed me too hard, not

not to endeavour to evade them: I would fain have taken up another subject, but soon found I had one to deal with whose long experience would not suffer him to be easily put upon a wrong scent. 'In the name of goodness,' *Mademoiselle*, continued he, taking me by the hand, 'do not endeavour to make your escape from me thus! Something that concerns you very nearly occasioned those reproaches you uttered against me. Explain yourself, let me beg. In what is it I have undesignedly affronted you? I should be cruelly afflicted, if I have been so unfortunate, it being very far from my intention: I will say more; I feel I know not what that interests me in your behalf. Speak, thou amiable creature,' continued he, seeing the confusion I was in. I would fain have set matters to rights by giving a different turn to my expressions; but it was done with so little appearance of truth, that he easily saw through the contrivance. 'Ah!' cried he, 'you dissemble with me. Here is some mystery I am convinced: besides, now I recollect, you expressed yourself with great earnestness concerning my son; perhaps you know him; you may know me too. You blush!—Ah, Forfan!' continued the marquis, turning to him, 'I suspect there is something of so much consequence in the trouble this young lady betrays, and what she has said, that I am resolved not to stir from hence till I have cleared up the business.'

I represented to myself, in such lively colours, the danger I ran if discovered by an incensed parent, who had so openly declared himself my implacable enemy, that I was ready to sink when he enquired whether I knew his son; but his last words terrified me so cruelly, that I fainted away. I was informed afterwards, that the marquis took abundance of pains to bring me to myself. He called for assistance; and whilst they were busied in assisting me, enquired of every one who I was, but not a soul knew me. I soon came to myself; but finding I was the subject of the discourse, I pretended to be still in a swoon, the better to discover the marquis's sentiments, and to avoid any farther questions, which would infallibly entangle me in new difficulties. I was in hopes of succeeding, as that no-

bleman's servants were expected every moment, and he had declared he was obliged to be at court that night.

During my pretended swoon, I heard the marquis enquire who I was of every one present. He called for the landlord; asked him whence I came; who brought me hither; where the person was I had mentioned as my relation; but all the marquis could get out of him only served to increase his perplexity. The landlord told him, that as to the pilgrim, I had never seen her before the preceding day; that an officer, whom they did not know, had brought me hither; and that if any one could give a farther information it must be the postilion: that they had observed a dispute I had with a valet de chambre belonging to the gentleman who came with me; but that being soon over, they could gather nothing from it. The marquis immediately sent for the postilion, and I gave myself over for lost, trembling every joint. I blamed myself for not following Saint Fal's advice.

The postilion, whom the marquis expected with great impatience, was not long in coming: but how agreeably was I surprized, when he declared he knew nothing of the gentleman, nor had ever heard his name mentioned, being only hired for this journey! 'Well,' cried the marquis, 'this is surprizing! and certainly there must be some mystery in it.—What think you, Forfan? Do not you wonder at so many precautions employed to prevent any discovery?'

The instant he uttered this, a servant came to acquaint the marquis that his equipage was ready. 'Let us go, then,' says he, 'since I can get no farther information, and am obliged to be at Versailles before midnight; I must lose no more time: but all this juggle shall not avail; I am not to be foiled in this manner, having an infallible means of coming to the bottom of this affair.' Upon this, he whispered Forfan; then, coming up to me, felt my pulse. He was of opinion that I slept, and would do well. Upon leaving the room, he charged the landlady to be very careful of me; assuring her I was a person of quality, as he very well knew, which ought to suffice; that in case I should grow worse, they must dispatch an express to Versailles, nam-

ing an hotel which I have forgot, and he would order a coach and a physician to attend me, if it should be requisite. Saying this, he went away. I no sooner heard the coach drive off, but I began to breathe again; and immediately resolved, for this bout, not to slip the first favourable moment for making my escape. When danger presses, one easily decides what to do.

Whilst the landlady remained in my chamber, I considered with myself what could be the marquis's motive for telling her I was a woman of quality. 'Can I be so happy,' said I to myself, 'as to be mistaken for another by him?' This point will be cleared up in the sequel of these Memoirs. But, to return,

After waiting a sufficient time, that I might be assured of the marquis's departure, I pretended to come to myself, and by degrees to be perfectly recovered. I feigned an inclination to rest, in order to be left alone, that I might immediately provide for my security, against the danger into which I was now plunged.

I went up to Lindamine's apartment: she was waiting for me with great impatience. The noise, occasioned by the marquis's enquiries in regard of me had reached her, and made her apprehend lest his arrival might prove a fresh obstacle to the design we had in hand; but she took heart, on my acquainting her with his departure. She told me, that her measures were so well taken, that she had not the least reason to doubt the success; particularly as Belizai, of whom she stood most in dread, was so well satisfied, by her assuring him she had so entirely forgot what was passed, that there was nothing to be apprehended on that side.

All that in any way regarded our journey was agreed on, and the hour fixed: the disposition seemed so well contrived, that I flattered myself we could not be disappointed. But how short-sighted is human prudence! Lindamine's ill stars were wearied with persecuting, and now conducted her to a port of safety; but I only began to feel the malignancy of mine. I had been told, that before I could be happy I must undergo all the trials that can possibly be made of a young woman's virtue.

Night had now stretched her sable

mantle over our side of the globe, and wrapped the face of things in obscurity: not the least noise was heard in the house, where all were asleep, except Lindamine and myself, who waited for her steward's calling upon us. Exactly at the time appointed he came to acquaint us every thing was ready; and conducted us down stairs, which he did without any light, to prevent accidents. The reckoning had been discharged that evening in presence of the hostler, who was ordered to open the gates at the time appointed; a precaution which very much facilitated our design.

When we were got into the chaise, and clear of the village, after a mutual recommendation of ourselves to Providence, Lindamine, taking me in her arms, 'At last, my dear,' said she, 'we are satisfied for once; I hope by day-break we shall be in a place of safety.' — 'Pray God we may!' I replied; 'but I tremble, without knowing the reason.' — 'It is the stillness of a dark night,' replied the pilgrim, 'which frightens you. Good God!' continued she, 'what would you do if alone in a wood, as I have often been?' I made her no answer to this, though my experience was not short of her's in that particular; for, whatever affection I might have for Lindamine, I was reserved as to my own affairs, and had not as yet let her into the secret history of my life. Such hasty confidences may suit romances well enough, where there is a necessity of making things hang together, and introducing as many speakers, good, bad, and indifferent, as possible, to swell the work; but truth, on which all Memoirs ought to be built, excludes improbabilities; and this rule must be so strictly observed, as often to omit real events, if they deviate too far from the usual course of things.

Lindamine's steward, who rode by the chaise-side, had not as yet, for want of time, given her any account of the commissions he had executed: he took this opportunity of doing it. What a pleasure was it to hear him say, that as to Saint Agnes's letters, of which his mistress had given him so great a charge, they would be safely delivered into Melicourt's own hand; for the steward had very luckily called to mind a relation of his, who served that young gentleman's father in quality of controller

troller upwards of twenty years. The steward assured us, that he should very shortly have an answer from his kinsman, to whom he had given in charge the delivery of the letters. I asked him with great precipitation, by what means the answer would come to hand. He replied, that not being able at the time of writing to guess where he might possibly then be, he had desired his relation to direct for him at the monastery I had mentioned; imagining, by what his mistress said, he should be in that neighbourhood. I was charmed with the man's contrivance. In my transport, I could not forbear crying out, 'My Minette will have tidings very shortly of her beloved! she will be overcome with joy; in which, too, I shall share with her!' The pilgrim was struck with admiration at this overflowing of good-nature; she commended it very politely; and from thence our discourse turned upon the new kind of life we were going to embrace.

We had gone about four miles; the postilion was resting his horses after getting up a pretty steep hill, when we heard, through the stillness of the night, the trampling of horses feet: this threw us into a consternation. 'I am undone,' cried out Lindamine; 'you will find Belizai's mistrust has made him suspect what I have done, and upon this he is come in pursuit of me. Good God! what shall I do if it proves so?'—'Make yourself easy, Madam, I beg of you,' replied her steward; 'you know I have carried arms, and do not want courage. As to the person you mention, he certainly has no right to controul you; and, at the worst, if he should persist in following you, can only learn the place where you have chose to retire. I think this is all you need apprehend; but if you have no mind even to be troubled with him, I can easily prevent it.'—'But I am afraid,' replied Lindamine, after pausing a little, 'left in his violence he may do you a mischief.'—'Do not be afraid, Madam,' replied the steward; 'I have a pair of good pistols, the sight of which will suffice to keep him in awe.' This was uttered with so much resolution, that Lindamine seemed something encouraged; she embraced me very close, her little heart beating very quick, and doubtless feeling a severe struggle from

the trial she apprehended her virtue must undergo. In effect, it cannot be denied, but a young woman is very wretched, when a part of her life is employed in gaining victories over herself, against the bent of her affections.

In the mean time the noise of the horses increased, and notwithstanding that of the chaise, now in motion, we could hear them gain upon us every moment: we even imagined that we discerned a small glimmering light on the road. Here I began to be alarmed in my turn. 'Heavens!' cried I, 'perhaps their design is on me!' The light increasing, seemed to be torches. This reminded me of what the old marquis said at going away, that he had infallible means of coming to the bottom of the affair. The reflection terrified me so much, that I did not dare to examine any farther. Lindamine, whose courage surpassed mine, looked out, and called to her steward, who had stopped to view the subject of our alarm. 'Ah, my dear girl!' cried she, sitting down again, 'I do not know which of us is pursued; but there are three men with torches coming full speed after us.'—'Are they a great way off?' replied I. 'About two hundred yards,' answered the steward, coming up to us. 'For God's sake,' said I, 'order the chaise to stop; I am convinced they come after me. As I have the most important reasons not to be discovered, I beg to alight: yonder hedge will conceal me till they are past.' Lindamine and her steward endeavoured to dissuade me from it; but the terrible apprehensions of falling again into the old marquis's hands, made me persist in my design, and obliged them to comply with what I desired. But the greater haste the worse speed; neither Lindamine nor I could possibly get the chaise open, so that the steward was obliged to alight and assist us. I was getting down, but the loss of so much time gave the horsemen I endeavoured to avoid the opportunity of coming up with us and surrounding the chaise. By the light of the torches, I discovered the Count De Saint Fal. He was as pale as death, presenting his hand to me, and endeavouring to speak, I supposed to reproach me; but he was so much out of breath with hard riding, or rather, as I understood afterwards, so overjoyed to find me, that he could not utter a syllable.

His valet de chambre, the same whom I had so genteelly tricked, supplied his deficiency. 'Really, Mademoiselle,' said he, with a taunting kind of air, 'you make a very ill return to my master's civilities. Were I in his place—' 'Hold your tongue,' cried the count, in a tone that shewed he would be obeyed; 'the young lady is her own mistress; and if, at this moment, I any way hinder her designs, it is what her interest absolutely requires.' Saying this, he approached me, and made a thousand excuses for his interrupting my journey; adding, that he would lay down such reasons for what he did, that I could not but approve of his conduct. I was so agreeably surprized with his behaviour, and the complaisance he shewed after I had put such a trick upon the confidence he reposed in me, that I had not a word to say.

Saint Fal, after giving me time to recover, addressed himself to Lindamine and me in the politest manner; and far from reproaching her, as another might have done, for spiriting me away, hearing that our expedition terminated in a monastery, he returned her thanks for the civilities shewn me, and extolled our discretion, as he called it; adding, that in order to make her some amends for depriving her of such an agreeable companion, he would wait on her himself with an account of me, as soon as I was conveniently settled.

During this conversation, a servant came and acquainted the count that his chaise was coming up. Upon this he told me, that computing from the time I left the village, as he was informed on his arrival there, he guessed he should overtake me; and therefore ordered his chaise to follow him: a precaution he was overjoyed to have taken, as it prevented any interruption in Lindamine's journey. I found, by the sequel of his discourse, that it was owing to his valet de chambre's coming to Versailles, and what they told him at the village, that his mistrust gave him so much uneasiness, as obliged him to take post-horses in pursuit of me.

By this time the chaise had joined us. Saint Fal presented his hand to help me in. I embraced Lindamine with great tenderness before I left her, and promised she should frequently hear from me.

When I had taken my place, the count was very diligent in employing

all possible precautions that could contribute to make my journey agreeable. To prevent my catching cold, he wrapped me in a cloak, and obliged me to cover my feet. In fine, he did every obliging thing good-manners could suggest, and then ordered the chaise to drive on. I could not forbear admiring his sweetness of temper, and found him truly worthy of esteem on so many accounts, that I heartily regretted my having given him any uneasiness.

I began to think the best excuse I could make Saint Fal for my flight, was to acquaint him with my adventure in meeting with the old marquis, and my dread of falling into his hands. The pretext was so natural, that I did not in the least doubt of its success. The count seemed much disturbed at such an unforeseen accident; he made me repeat every syllable his uncle had uttered; he very humanely put himself in my place, and agreed, perhaps through complaisance, that I was perfectly right in making my escape. 'Whatever vexation,' said he, 'your flight occasioned, or trouble this unexpected return of my uncle throws me into, I am overjoyed in knowing from your own mouth, that your departure was not owing to any aversion I apprehended you might have taken to me. If you knew, lovely Jenny,' continued he, 'how much I suffered, when I did not find you at the village, you would certainly be moved. I concluded, that I had been so unfortunate as to lose your favour, and that my company was become disagreeable to you: but you have revived me. How happy should I be, were I honoured so far as to enjoy your friendship!—' 'Alas, that you have already!' cried I, overcome with his polite behaviour, his nice turn of sentiments, and that they aimed at nothing farther than my friendship. 'Your merit,' continued I, 'abundantly deserves that I should think myself happy in such a worthy friend; neither is this the first time that I have valued myself on the respect and civilities received at your hands.'—'Heavens!' cried Saint Fal, interrupting me, 'who could behave otherwise to so charming a creature? Nay, more, I am so entirely devoted to you, my heart is so far prepossessed in your behalf, I love you with that delicacy (this sure will give no offence) that I

‘ am resolved to serve you even against my own interest. No more mistrust, therefore, lovely Jenny; no longer look upon me as a tyrant, obstructing your secret inclinations. I promise, I even vow, notwithstanding the ardent affection I have for you, that I will ever promote your happiness as far as lies in my power. All I ask in return for an esteem (call it love) so disinterested, is, that you will never forbid me your company. Unruly passions are strangers to my breast: it knows no desire, but that of seeing and admiring you. Should it ever exceed those bounds, the delicacy, and much more the virtue I profess to cultivate, will always check any such attempts, and prevent them giving you the least disturbance.’

‘ Such formal assurances of so generous a friendship, so rarely seen in this age, moved me exceedingly, and were answered with a becoming sincerity. From thence we fell upon the subject of my lover’s father. I informed Saint Fal, that I very much apprehended, lest, suspicious as he appeared to me, he should have me watched so narrowly, especially on finding his orders neglected, that at last he would find me out, wherever I should retire. ‘ Make yourself easy, dear Miss,’ replied Saint Fal; ‘ you will be much safer at Versailles than elsewhere. The precautions I have taken will elude all enquiries, for you will pass for an officer’s widow who is come to solicit some favour at court. The house, where you are to lodge, is already acquainted with that particular. A waiting-woman and a cook-maid will make up your little family; and as they will only know you under the name of the Countess Des Roches, which I have invented for you, they cannot any way disturb our project by their tittle-tattle. The pretence I have invented for your coming to Versailles will sufficiently screen you from the eyes of the curious. No place can be properer than the court for concealment, where every one is taken up with their own concerns. Strangers pass there for what they please, nobody troubling themselves to examine into their affairs. I have known several who have established themselves there under a travelling title, and their children have succeeded to it, as well as to their

substance. Silence and a long possession are the proofs of their assumed nobility. As to ladies, in particular, their affairs not being of any great consequence, they are seldom molested, unless it be with too much complaisance, where their merit is conspicuous, but never on account of their quality. Does not every one know, they may assume what rank they please?’

‘ All this, Sir,’ replied I, ‘ is very well; I am satisfied I shall not be disturbed on this head, and that under the name you have invented, I shall frustrate the most curious scrutiny that may possibly be made after me. But, pray, how shall I find wherewithal to support my condition? For I take it, empty titles are as thin as at court as elsewhere. I have not a farthing of income, nor the least expectation of that kind. You are sufficiently informed, that a capricious turn of fortune has raised me from my original condition, and left me in a very precarious situation, without the least means of subsisting. But must assure you, Sir,’ continued I, ‘ rather than make a figure at the expense of what I think honourable, I would return a thousand times to the wretchedness of my birth. Taking therefore this for granted, as I believe you will, I cannot see—’ ‘ I should not have given you time to form these reflections,’ said Saint Fal, interrupting me, ‘ had I not taken a singular pleasure in hearing you. Ah, lovely Jenny, how noble are these sentiments! What a veil do they throw over the obscurity of your extraction! Birth is the effect of chance; and where Providence has allotted it, gives no grounds to value ourselves upon. He who should arrogate any thing to himself on that score, would be justly reproached, that his acquired merit must be very insignificant, since he has recourse to what passed in the world before he made his appearance in it. He might, in that case, be justly said to adorn himself with the dust of his ancestors. But, to cut the matter short, if you were not born in an elevated rank, your merit highly deserves it on many accounts: with so much good sense and discretion, you will certainly succeed in the world; every thing will smile upon you; your family will be

maintained, and you—' 'But,' said I, interrupting him a second time, 'how?' For you can never make me believe—' 'Why, Mademoiselle,' cried Saint Fal very smartly, 'it is no matter; you shall find, by experience, that I am not building castles in the air.'—'Alas, Sir!' replied I, with some emotion, 'I am satisfied as to that particular: I dare say, you will order every thing so well, that it will be a secret to all the world but myself, from whence my subsistence comes; but still, I can never prevail on myself to accept of it.'—'And why not?' replied Saint Fal very eagerly; 'can you be so mistaken as to apprehend what the world will say? What have you to do with other people? Will any one know you? No, certainly; nor have you any design of making acquaintances. This being granted, who can hinder you from living retired, and cultivating your talents till you are settled in the world? The publick will regard no more of your conduct than what openly appears, and will applaud it accordingly, and without entering—' 'But I shall be kept,' cried I, interrupting him with great emotion; 'there is no palliating the matter; I am not to learn what that word means.'—'Well, then, Mademoiselle,' continued Saint Fal very impatiently, 'you will be kept, since you must absolutely use that expression. Where is the harm? After all, the meaning of words varies according to the use to which men apply them. There are daily instances of vice being kept by them; why should there not be one, from whom virtue may find the same relief?'

It was thus the count endeavoured to move those scruples, which a virtuous disposition raised in my mind; but all his wit and experience in the world, both of which he possessed in a sovereign degree, could not convince me on this occasion. The extremity to which I was reduced, and the approach of want, could scarce excuse so dangerous a step. In reality, I ought to have submitted to the orders he was to put in execution, rather than thus expose my innocence. A young woman can never be too much upon her guard against herself: a word, a trifle, oftentimes effects her overthrow. Real virtue is al-

ways attended with diffidence and humility; it's constant lesson is to fear ourselves: it is this happy diffidence which crowns the work, and makes us triumph over the fiercest assaults of vice.

These reflections brought me to Versailles. It was now eight in the morning; the sun shone full upon the palace, and yielded the finest sight my eyes ever beheld. My transport, occasioned by such grandeur and magnificence, was so great, that I even forgot myself. Saint Fal, not imagining what it was which thus engrossed my thoughts, and who was always apprehensive of giving me the least uneasiness; or fearing, perhaps, that I might give myself up to reflections arising from our preceding discourse; asked me, with some concern, what made me so silent. We were then at the end of the Great Alley, and going to turn off to the left. 'Good God!' cried I, very impatiently, 'do not disturb me; you are very barbarous to interrupt me in the contemplation of so delightful a view.' When I said this, my eyes were so earnestly fixed on the palace, that the count easily guessed at the occasion of my silence, and the earnestness I had betrayed. 'I ask your pardon, fair lady,' said he; 'but I must tell you, nothing can be a greater proof of your exquisite taste, than the attention you bestow on the beauties of that place.' Upon this, he ordered the postilion to stop. I ran over with my eye that charming prospect, asking a thousand questions, without allowing him time to answer one half of them.

When I had recovered myself a little from the admiration so many fine objects excited, I asked Saint Fal very gravely, if that was the place I was to lodge at. He could not forbear smiling at such a question, whilst he acquainted me, that it was inhabited only by those whose rank or employments placed them near the king's person, of which he gave me a kind of detail, that lasted till we reached the Orangerie Street, where the chaise set us down.

A woman of about five and twenty, mistress of the house where I was to lodge, having been acquainted by Monsieur De Saint Fal's valet de chambre of our arrival, waited for me at the door; she received me in a mighty obliging manner. 'Good God!' said she, turning to the count, after embracing me, 'how young this lady must have been married!'

‘ married ! She is an infant, exceeding handsome ; it is a crying shame she should be a widow at these years ! ’ This harangue put me to the blush. The count, seeing the confusion I was in, turned the discourse, and presenting his hand, led me up a very handsome stair-case to my apartment. The reflection of the sun from the glasses and gilding with which it was adorned cast a prodigious lustre. I must own, I felt a satisfaction arise in my breast ; fond as I had always been of finery, such lodgings and furniture could not fail of affording me a singular pleasure. It did not escape the count ; who, as he has since told me, often pleased himself with the thoughts of having succeeded in his endeavours to strike my imagination at the first entrance, knowing very well that nothing diverts melancholy more than the gaiety of those objects which surround us. He was certainly in the right ; outward show is always bewitching, and the gaudy appearance of things more or less carries the greatest weight, especially with women ; which clearly proves our small share of solidity, not excepting myself, notwithstanding our vanity in priding ourselves upon what they term *sentiments*, the parade of which is now so much in vogue, that the cinder-wench will not yield to a duchess in what is called *manner of thinking*. This folly of an affected heroism may have it’s application, as well as that of luxury. Luxury is said to be a mark of concealed poverty : may one not venture to say, that *sentiments*, for which some with so much ostentation often value themselves, are a specious cover, by which they endeavour to dazzle the eyes of the world, and cover their own weakness ?

When I was put in possession of my apartment, Saint Fal desired I would employ the good sense he knew me mistress of, to amuse myself in his absence ; giving me to understand that he was obliged to pass the rest of the day with the old marquis, for whom he must invent some story concerning me ; designing, in order to excuse himself, to pretend I had made my escape from him. I could not forbear trembling at what he said. ‘ For Heaven’s sake, Sir,’ said I, ‘ take care how you behave on this nice point ! Your uncle seemed to me a person of so much distrust and penetration, that I am very apprehensive,

‘ left, after laying together the rem-
‘ counter he had in the village, and
‘ your account of my escape, he does
‘ not employ such sure methods of find-
‘ ing out the truth, as will infallibly
‘ discover where I am. If that should
‘ happen, you know I am entirely ruin-
‘ ed.’ — ‘ I have already told you, Ma-
‘ demoiselle,’ replied Saint Fal, ‘ that
‘ you have nothing to fear on your side ;
‘ it is on me the marquis’s displeasure
‘ will light.’ — ‘ And is not that of
‘ sufficient consequence ? ’ cried I : ‘ I
‘ should be very sorry you underwent
‘ any uneasiness on my account.’ —
‘ Good God, Mademoiselle ! ’ replied
Saint Fal, as he was retiring, ‘ that is
‘ the least of my care ; my cousin’s re-
‘ turn, for his father will certainly send
‘ for him upon hearing your evasion
‘ the notion I have, that sooner or later
‘ he will see you ; the certainty I have
‘ of the pleasure such an interview will
‘ create in you ; these are uneasinesses
‘ much more real than any I apprehend
‘ from acquainting my uncle with your
‘ escape.’ I easily understood the mean-
ing of all this ; but as I had no mind to
enter on such a subject, I let him go
without returning any answer.

When he was gone, the chamber-
maid, who had been hired to wait on me,
came up : she seemed towards fifty, with
an easy insinuating air. Her name was
Brochan, and the landlady of the house
gave her an extraordinary character. She
had lately left a duchess’s service, by rea-
son, as she informed me herself, of a
violent passion the secretary had for her,
and which might possibly have endan-
gered her innocence. I could not for-
bear smiling to myself at this acknow-
ledgment. Her age and plain face were
a sufficient security against any attack
of that nature : I soon discovered it
foible to be a foolish belief, that she in-
spired love into all the men who looked
at her, which she imagined could not
be with indifference : to this conceit she
added another notion, equally ridicu-
lous, that she was nobly born. It is true
she could not be ignorant that every one
knew her to be a cook’s daughter ; but
her folly, or rather vanity, prevented
this objection, by assuring you very
gravely, that she had been changed
nurse.

Madame De Geneval (for that
my landlady’s name) made her ap-
pearance soon after the chamber-maid. No

I am disposed to draw characters, it would be upardonable to omit her's. She was tall, handsome, and well made; but the misfortune was, she knew it too well; a failing that renders the greatest charms very disagreeable: her character was, to find fault with every thing, though her genteel way of doing it made some amends.

Most things at first smile upon us; Madame De Geneval was so very obliging and assiduous, that I made her very sincere returns, attended with too little reserve. The event will shew plainly, that young persons ought to be very cautious and circumspect with their new acquaintance. This gentlewoman's behaviour has taught me, at a very dear rate, to inculcate so necessary a lesson to others.

Before I went to bed, (for the landlady and my waiting-woman had determined it should be so, in order to refresh me after a journey of between two and three hundred miles, as they imagined) my chest of drawers was opened for me. 'You see,' said Madame De Geneval, 'every thing is laid in as exact order as if you had been present. Monsieur De Saint Fal has said so much in your praise, and so earnestly recommended the care of your trunks, that I took the things out myself. When I opened them, I wrote an account of what I found; but this is a liberty I would not have taken, without the positive intreaties of your friend the count, who insisted on every thing being in its proper place against your arrival: but go to sleep, pretty lady,' said she, embracing me, 'we shall have time enough to discourse these matters over when you wake.—Bring her a perrin-ger of broth,' continued she, going out of the room, 'she will rest the better after it.' Brochan had it ready: after I had taken it, she helped me to undress. I got into bed, upon which she retired, shutting the door after her.

My mind was in too great an agitation to admit of any repose. May I venture here to disclose myself ingenuously? Will not the professed prudes, those splenetick ladies I have before mentioned, take the alarm at the secret motions of my soul I am going to divulge? What will it avail, if I should give a false gloss (and nothing can be more easy) to my thoughts at that time? They will be equally severe, and I should

forfeit my title to sincerity, that truly valuable commodity, under a protestation of which I entered upon these Memoirs. Self-love, indeed, must suffer; but amiable Truth will entitle me to some compassion.

Had I called my heart to a strict account, I am persuaded at first I should have found it more affected with the brilliant situation I was in, than with the secret murmurs of a repining virtue. There is a wide difference between arming ourselves against future trials, and encountering the immediate influence of things present: we faintly resist the charms of what we actually possess. Wise men often exclaim against the abuse of riches, but we have few instances of their practising the doctrine they teach.

I was no sooner left alone, but I looked with pleasure on the gay objects which surrounded me; the glasses, gildings, the pictures, raised such bewitching ideas in my mind, that I could no longer resist the temptation of taking a nearer view of the things I was in some measure mistress of. Being alone, I got up, bolted the doors, and indulged my curiosity. It is true, virtue made some little effort before it abandoned me to these allurements; but a sudden thought represented my curiosity as absolutely necessary. 'I must,' said I to myself, 'be acquainted with what the drawers contain. The things are given out to be mine: if I should betray any ignorance, it may raise some suspicion prejudicial to the part I am to act.'

Prepossessed with this necessity, I went into the wardrobe, in which were placed two large chests. I opened them with some apprehension. This scrutiny, though attended with a kind of qualm, as if I had been engaged in mischief, soon amused me by the alluring discoveries it produced, especially in respect of one whose birth and education had not made her mistress of any one individual thing.

Next to my bed-chamber was a closet, adorned with pannels of looking-glass; the hangings, like those of the apartment, were crimson damask bordered with gold fringe: several pictures, representing children playing together, and beautiful landscapes, all placed with great symmetry between the glasses, had a charming effect; but what pleased me most, was a book-case at the farther end,

end, containing great choice of new musick books.

My toilette was placed in the wardrobe I mentioned before; it contained every thing that regards dress: the boxes were filled with bracelets, gloves, and modern trinkets in an elegant taste. Whatever inclination I had to examine every thing in particular, the fear of being interrupted, not having sufficient time to go through the whole, obliged me to content myself with a transient view of so many bewitching objects.

I was not a little surprized, in opening the chests, at the great abundance of linen and other things. What was designed for my wearing appeared exceeding fine: but a compleat service of plate, which I found by itself, I must needs own quite charmed me.

Another chest furnished a set of china of the finest sort; in the partitions were contained every thing belonging to the table.

After running over all these things, I returned to my chamber. I was curious to know the contents of a large commode with a marble cover, which was no small ornament to the room. The first drawer was filled with mercer's goods, for making gowns proper for the several seasons of the year; nothing was forgot even of the most trifling nature. This detail may very well be thought tedious, yet it is really necessary, in order to give a just idea of my new admirer. Self-love possibly finds it's account here, but that is a subject I am not very willing to discuss: such an obliging attention must necessarily make a very engaging impression on the mind of a young creature. Not to own I was very much affected with this generous behaviour would be making too free with sincerity; and as experience convinced me that his conduct was not in the least influenced by any criminal views, I was the more sensible of the obligations conferred on me.

The little rest my affairs had allowed in the foregoing nights, oppressed me to that degree, that, notwithstanding my eagerness to continue the scrutiny, I was obliged to desist; sleep overpowered me, and I threw myself into bed. There my soul, perfectly satisfied with my present situation, and void of care for what was to come, entertained none but the most agreeable ideas, followed

by so profound a repose, that I did not wake till the day was far spent.

It was near sun-set, when the noise of the coaches obliged me to rise; I immediately recollected that I had fastened my chamber-door, upon which I went and drew back the bolts. This was no sooner done, but my waiting-woman entered. 'Lord, Madam!' said she in a wheedling tone, 'you are certainly very timorous, to barricade yourself thus in broad day-light. I have been several times at the door, to know if you wanted me; but the fear of disturbing you made me wait till now.' This was answered with great indifference on my side. Her countenance did not please me: such antipathies are many times involuntary, and from my childhood I was liable to prepossessions of this nature; though they are often groundless, and always argue a weakness in our understanding. We ought to guard against such follies, as there are many who, by an unfortunate cast in their aspect, promise nothing commendable; and yet their real worth greatly surpasses that of others whose countenances are very taking at first sight. Every day's experience justifies this remark, though very few correct the failing.

Brochan having opened the window, I placed myself at one of them. The evening was delightfully pleasant, and abundance of people were taking the air. Such a sight was altogether unusual to me, it's great variety affording an agreeable amusement. I was charmed with the neatness and elegance of the women's dresses; I examined them with great attention, and such as pleased me most drew my eyes after them as far as I could possibly distinguish one object from another. This so entirely took up my thoughts, that every thing else was banished from my breast.

Women must own, with me, that our strongest propensity is to examine each other; this is generally attended either with jealousy or envy, as we can seldom prevail on ourselves to do one another justice: a wretched disposition, which seems inseparable from the sex. As much as I have at this day got the better of little follies, if I deal ingenuously, I must acknowledge myself still subject to such mean impressions. If ever I should publish the Sequel of my

Advent

Adventures, as perhaps I may, I propose to treat of this matter more at large, and prove by examples how careful we ought to be in forming a judgment on outward appearances: fatal experience has convinced me of this. I am now very cautious, it is true, and endeavour to correct so great a weakness; nevertheless, it often happens that custom, that *second nature*, prevails over reason.

Whilst I was deeply engaged in examining every one that passed by, somebody clasped me fast in their arms, without my perceiving who it was took that liberty with me. My colour came, and I turned about very hastily, struggling to free myself from such an unexpected embrace. 'It would be no easy matter to surprize you,' said Madame de Geneval, laughing; 'you are so much upon your guard, and are so strong, there would be nothing got by romping with you.' Upon my asking her pardon with a smile, for being so rough in disengaging myself; 'I will pardon you this once,' replied she in a jesting way, 'but another time I shall not be so easily prevailed upon; and even now, it shall only be on this condition, that you do us the honour of supping with us.' This invitation was accompanied with so polite an air, that I could not refuse it; after which, we placed ourselves at the window, and began to criticise those who passed by.

Madame De Geneval had a particular talent for this dangerous pleasure: dress, figure, countenance, nothing escaped her; the women seldom found mercy at her hands. Those who were handsome, rarely escaped the most satirical strokes: the men came better off; that is, such as were above the ordinary rate, for the others were excluded all favours.

'What do you think of her,' cried Madame De Geneval, 'who comes this way with that flaunting gait, and false air of beauty, that deceives at a distance? Do not be mistaken; her fine complexion is only borrowed from the mysteries of the toilette, as her carriage is from the information of a much-consulted looking-glass: for all her affectation, she is very plain, as you will own when you see her nearer. I will lay a wager,' added she, 'that you would not suspect her hair, tricked up as it is with ribbands, was none of her own: and yet she is as

bald as a coot, and has recourse to Art for supplying the deficiency of Nature. Speak the truth; would not you guess, by her attendants and dress, that her husband belonged at least to the exchequer? Far from it; he is cook to the Prince of ——. Though her mother sold fruit, her vanity aimed at his steward; but she is very well off in marrying his cook, who must cheat his master to maintain her extravagance: and yet, in return for this too great indulgence, he has never a quiet moment. They say his heart is broke; but it is all to no purpose, she goes on her old way.— Pray behold that other woman who is coming out of the great gates. By her behaviour, and the airs she gives herself, would you imagine her to be five and twenty? And yet she is turned of fifty. But in order to impose on those who do not know her age, she tells them with an affected air of sincerity that she dresses in brown, because it is her favourite colour, and suits any age. But the best of the jest is, that she cannot prevail on herself to marry a man who has long made his addresses, for fear, she says, of dying in child-bed.' Saying this, Madame De Geneval burst into such a hearty fit of laughter, that I could not forbear joining with her, though I knew not why.

We had spent near an hour in this kind of amusement, when a flourish on the kettle-drums, and a hurry in the street, made me enquire what could be the occasion. 'The king is returning from hunting,' replied Madame De Geneval; 'we shall see him pass by.' My heart began to flutter at this, as I immediately recollected the first time of my seeing his majesty, and the consequences his presence had drawn after it. Though I was now grown up to years of discretion, and had already satisfied my curiosity, I found the same eager desire of seeing the king seize my soul as in the forest. It is true I concealed my earnestness. Vanity, which always grows upon us, made me imagine I should want no assistance to distinguish the king from the rest: persuaded of this, I fixed my eyes on that side the king was expected, and gave very little attention to the criticisms Madame De Geneval, with her usual charity, passed upon every one who came in her way.

R

My

My impatience did not remain long unsatisfied: the hunt returned; and, contrary to what was usual, moved very slowly. Day-light was not quite gone; and I congratulated myself on the opportunity I was going to have of considering the king's person very attentively; but the false shame of informing myself which was the king disappointed my hopes, surrounded as he was by the courtiers. By good luck, his majesty dropped something out of his hand, otherwise he would have passed by undistinguished; but the eagerness every one expressed to take up his glove and return it, sufficiently pointed him out, and I had the satisfaction I so much desired.

My admiration of this charming prince was so great, that I could not forbear observing to Madame De Geneval the gracefulness of his person; but she scarce made any answer to what I said on the subject: her eyes were fixed on a nobleman, with whom she seemed to be entirely charmed, and was no less solicitous to make me sensible of his personal accomplishments, than I was in remarking those of the young monarch. But the best of it was, we mutually applauded each other's remarks, falsely imagining they regarded one and the same object.

In the mean time, the court was directly under our windows; I was so taken up with the sight, that I quite forgot I was in a very plain undress. Madame De Geneval was full dressed; and, either through malice or inadvertency, did not give me the hint: thus was I unwittingly exposed to the curious eyes of the company; for my little vanity would never have relished the negligence of my dishabille. I think I have elsewhere mentioned how much I suffered on such occasions, and indeed do to this day.

'Good God!' cried Madame De Geneval, with a mysterious air, but such as betrayed how well she was satisfied with her own dear self; 'these men are turned fools, surely! One cannot be at a window, but they stare one through! See, Madam, I beg, how they eye us!' In effect, they all, to a single man, looked up as they passed by. 'Indeed, Madam,' replied I, 'you make me observe what would not have surprized me, had we been the only women who looked out of win-

dow in the street; but, methinks, the whole court seems entirely taken up with staring at us.'—'Oh!' replied Madame De Geneval, 'what you say does not at all surprize me. I am so well known, so very well known, my pretty lady, that you must not wonder at what you see. You do not know that the king himself is pleased often to favour me with a look; not that I would have you think,' continued the vain thing, putting on an air of modesty, 'that I attribute this to any thing very flattering in myself: my husband goes every day to court, and as he is upon very good terms there, it is no wonder if some notice is taken of me. Did not I tell you so?' added Madame De Geneval, standing up. 'See, the king does us the honour to look at us! He certainly remembers my face. For Heaven's sake, Madam, let us retire!' continued she, in a childish, affected tone; 'I can stand it no longer.'

A nobleman, who was opposite to the window, singled me out with his hat to those who were near him. 'Ow, gentlemen,' said he, 'that young lady to be exceeding handsome; and that the dishabille you see her in, far surpasses all the arts of dress.' This was no sooner spoke, but every one eyed me with fresh attention, and bowed to us one after another. The king being directly opposite to our window, looked up a second time, and took off his hat. I blushed prodigiously, and imagining I ought to return the compliment, made an exceeding low curtsy. 'Lord, Madam, what are you doing?' cried Madame De Geneval loud enough to be overheard, 'nobody salutes the king. You'll make us be taken for mere country creatures.' The king and the whole court fell a laughing at this ill-timed reprimand. Whether this was owing to the manner of expressing herself, or my simplicity, I cannot determine; this I know very well, the hasty reproach struck me all of a heap. I should have remained in this condition for a considerable time, had not Madame De Geneval, in order to ingratiate herself with me, and shew her knowledge of the court, given me the names and history of part of his majesty's retinue, though heard with great indifference on my side. I had not forgotten the little mortification I fancied she

had drawn upon me, and self-love made my resentment appear very justifiable.

My vain cajoling landlady, imagining my silence proceeded from the relish I had for her conversation, continued the subject for some time, sparing nobody that came in her way; when breaking off on a sudden, she proposed going down to her apartment, supper-time, as she said, drawing near. I replied, that it would be proper for me to put on some head-cloaths, since she would not allow me to dress. 'Oh! by no means,' cried Madame De Geneval, 'you are killing handsome in the dress you are in: neither am I the only one who thinks so, as you have just now heard. We shall have frequent opportunities of seeing you dressed; for this once let us enjoy you in your native charms.' This compliment was answered in a proper manner on my side, not forgetting her beauty, with which she seemed mightily taken; as, indeed, this was truly her weak side. 'It is very justly said,' cried she, begging pardon for the freedom of taking me in her arms, 'that women of quality are always distinguishable by their behaviour. I have ever been fond of their company, as their conversation is so very instructing.' What does not prejudice effect! As long as she took me for the Countess De Roches, this was always her style; but, the moment she discovered the truth, she protested to one who gave me an account of it, that she all along took me for a counterfeiter; that, notwithstanding the airs I was pleased to give myself, she saw through the artifice, and every day discovered something that betrayed my mean birth. So much for prejudice.

Although I was very much pressed to go down undressed as I was, I should never have consented, had not Monsieur De Geneval surprized us in the debate. He accosted us in a genteel manner, and paid his compliments gracefully enough. He had something of the fop in him, his voice trifling, and much upon the familiar. As superintendant to the Duke of —, he imagined himself company for any one: handsome, tall, well made, always in the pink of the mode, and very full of himself; a ready wit, and so happy in his little sallies, that the spleen was entirely banished wherever he came, and made his conversation much coveted. The vicious part

of any one's character is much easier attained than what is valuable in it. His satirical vein Madame De Geneval had acquired, and was very ready at biting expressions; but then she wanted the fine turn of wit in applying them, of which he was a perfect master; insomuch, that he would frequently lash people to their faces with so much art, adapting his voice and expression so justly, that every one present, except the person concerned, immediately discovered who was aimed at: nay, it often happened that the object of his raillery was the most diverted of the whole company. Let any one judge if such talents were not esteemed in an age so favourable to satirical reflections, that all charity for our neighbour is exploded as a thing quite out of date.

Our supper was perfectly neat and elegant. Monsieur De Geneval acquitted himself exceedingly well in doing the honours of his house. We were five at table, without reckoning a boy of seven years old, so very ill-bred, that he seized every thing he could lay his hands on, daubed the table-cloth, and spoiled the cloaths of those who had the misfortune to be near him; and all this without his father's being allowed to reprimand him. As he was pretty, and by way of compliment said to be like his mother, she thought upon this account he could not be too much indulged, and consequently spoiled him to such a degree, that he was ready to fling things at any one's head who presumed to find fault with him.

A relation of Monsieur De Geneval's, about fifty years of age, made the third woman in the company. Her humour seemed gay and airy. She amused us with abundance of pleasantry, accompanied with so much wit, as threw a veil over her age, and the malicious turns she frequently gave to things. She was not all of a piece; her folly betrayed itself in giving us to understand, that in her younger days she stood unrivalled in point of beauty. Then her discourse ran upon the extravagances princes and noblemen had committed in making their addresses to her. There was no end of this subject; and if any one took a fancy to contradict her, as it sometimes happened, the scene was changed in an instant; from affable and polite, she became downright scurrilous.

A gentleman belonging to the household, about thirty, was the very opposite to the person just mentioned. Taciturnity, gloom, and disdain, were strongly imprinted on his countenance. He never was known to approve of any thing in all his life; and before you uttered a single syllable, you might depend upon being contradicted by him. *But* was his favourite transition, and *No* his darling particle.

Notwithstanding this difference of characters, I soon perceived that the company was agreed upon making me talk, with a design to learn some account of my affairs; but Monsieur De Saint Fal, who had a good deal of foresight, gave me my lesson in writing. My story was framed, digested, and got by heart. I came off very well, notwithstanding their attacks, and this chiefly by the concise answers I gave. The only secret for baffling curiosity, is to say little. There is no hazard in being cautious; whereas, giving a loose to the tongue, overburdens the memory, and endangers the contradicting one's self: a ticklish situation, to which persons ought never to expose themselves, who have reasons not to be publicly known.

The desert had not been long served up, when a footman came and whispered something to Madame De Geneval. She immediately turned towards me, and told me in the ear, that a nobleman enquired for me. Imagining it must be Saint Fal, who was come with some news, I ordered the footman to conduct him to my apartment, and was preparing to go and receive him. The servant hearing me name that nobleman, assured me it was not him, but that he guessed by his livery, it must be the Duke of —. The name surprized me, and Monsieur De Geneval perceiving it, asked me if I had any reason for not receiving the visit, for in that case it was only saying that I did not sup at home. My answer was, that I did not desire to be seen, as the person was an utter stranger; and I did not apprehend what his business could be. Madame De Geneval rose from table at this, bidding me make myself very easy, for she would speak to the duke herself; adding, with a mysterious air, that she partly guessed his errand. Saying this, she left the room; making me several signs which I did not comprehend.

I expected her return with great im-

patience, wondering what could detain her so long. The dread I had of the old marquis, brought him continually to my mind, whenever troublesome accidents gave me any uneasiness.

Monsieur De Geneval perceiving me much disquieted, endeavoured to make me share the mirth of the company. Complaisance obliged me to feign an attention to what passed. What an irksome task is it to counterfeit a satisfaction, when the mind labours under perplexity!

After half an hour's stay, Madame De Geneval returned laughing very heartily. 'Did not I tell you,' said she, speaking to me, 'that we were examined very narrowly when at the window? Without vanity, our charms make some noise in the world.' — 'Who doubts that,' replies the husband; 'all the court envies my happiness in possessing so lovely a creature as Madame De Geneval!' — 'None of your jests,' continued she, half angry at his ironical tone. 'I could give very convincing proofs of the truth of what you say; but that is not the business at present. It is very certain I have had a thousand soft things said to me just now by a very gallant spark. It is true, I was not altogether imposed on, knowing very well,' continued Madame De Geneval, pointing slyly to me, 'the countess has the best title to the courtship, though addressed to me.' — 'Meaning me, Madam?' replied I very gravely. 'How can I be any way concerned? I am but just arrived from the other end of the kingdom, have no acquaintance.' — 'Alas! that is no reason,' replied Monsieur De Geneval very earnestly; 'there are a thousand for your engaging their adoration.' I could not forbear smiling at the manner in which I was addressed. The wife, thinking perhaps this was carrying things too far, and, like many other women, was piqued to hear another extolled, or might be naturally a little jealous, corrected the transport her husband had been guilty of, by saying, that if I had not really been so very handsome, novelty was of great service in this country; nevertheless it must be supported by something more lasting than beauty; that the vogue drew admirers for a while, but when that was over, the object was as easily neglected as it had been eagerly pursued. The

gentleman of the household opposed this maxim, asserting, that what was once truly amiable was always so. Madame De Geneval, who had her reasons for maintaining what she had advanced, brought a recent example in favour of her own opinion. 'You all saw,' said she, addressing her discourse to her husband's kinswoman, 'the famous Lyonnoise, so much talked of about two years ago at Paris. She was as fair as alabaster, had fine features, a good shape, and an air of grandeur. Notwithstanding all this, I could find nothing very extraordinary in her. She no sooner appeared in publick, but she was followed by all the world. I happened to be one day at the Thuilleries, when the Lyonnoise was walking there. As the Great Alley perfectly swarmed, I enquired of every one I met, what could occasion such a crowd. "Good God, Madam! where do you come from," replied the person, "not to know that the beautiful Lyonnoise is come to Paris, and is now actually walking in the Thuilleries?" I shrugged up my shoulders at such a preposterous answer, and resolved to see with my own eyes on what it was grounded. I made my way through the crowd, and at last got a sight of this so much extolled beauty. Whether through prejudice, not being according to my taste, or not so handsome as they pretended, she did not please me at all. I pitied the stupidity of the publick, which often is lavish of its praises on objects that, upon a nearer view, are scarce tolerable. It is true, sooner or later, the prejudice is laid aside, as it happened in the case of this very Lyonnoise.

'Some weeks after this I was in the Thuilleries. I met her again, but she was scarce taken notice of: nevertheless, she was exactly the same; and, as the inconstancy of mode never affects me, methought she was even handsomer than at first.'—'No wonder!' replied the kinswoman very sily; 'you liked her the better, because nobody admired her, and consequently envy had nothing to work on. Put the case, she had once more become a reigning toast, and you had seen her surrounded with a crowd of admirers, she would have appeared as plain as at first. The thing speaks for itself.'

Madame De Geneval frowned a little

at this cutting remark. From one of her character, a sharp reply might have been expected, but she had her reasons for being moderate. Interest, which always rules, and to which she was an absolute slave, prevailed on her to stifle her resentment. To do it with a better grace, she went on thus.

'The Lyonnoise, nettled at the injustice she met with at Paris, came to shew herself at court. Her charms had a run, but soon met the same fate as before. She disappeared on a sudden; and I have since been informed, is gone for England in search of new admirers.'

I presently discovered the malicious drift of this story, and the application Madame De Geneval was willing should be made of it; from whence I concluded, that her character and mine would not long sympathize.

The discourse ran again upon the duke's visit, which Madame De Geneval's reflections had interrupted. She told us, that all she could gather from what he said was, that in returning from hunting, the sight of a young lady had made such an impression on him, that he came to enquire after her; and, in case she had any affairs depending at court, to offer his service.

Madame De Geneval added, that all this was expressed in so polite a manner, that though she was prepared to answer this gallant preamble, which doubtless was aimed at me, as it deserved, yet she could not avoid replying with a great deal of respect, and letting him know who I really was. The Duke, upon hearing my name, assured her he was well acquainted with my family, for which he had a great value, and would have the honour of being introduced at a more seasonable opportunity.

'I apprehended, from the confusion in which this nobleman retired,' continued my landlady, 'that without doubt he took the countess for one who had her fortune to make, and that he need only come to be well received: a foolish presumption men are often guilty of, who think, that in visiting a woman they do her an honour. This vanity must either be grounded on the figure they make, or the confidence they have of our weakness. As for my part, who am often exposed to the intrigues of these gentlemen, I use them with a great deal of freedom, ridicule
• their

' their serious faces, amuse myself, and
 ' laugh at them; this I take to be the
 ' method.'—' Not so very commendable,'
 ' replied the husband, something maliciously,
 ' as you may perhaps imagine; under this
 ' pretext of indifference, the gallants are retained
 ' and listened to without suspicion. " Their
 ' " follies amuse me," you will say. No
 ' doubt of it; and that is just what they
 ' look for: to have admittance into
 ' certain houses, is all they can hope
 ' for at first; taking up your time agreeably
 ' and amusing you ladies is their second step;
 ' but what lucky fellows, if you do them the
 ' honour to smile on their endeavours!'—' Lord!
 ' cried Madame De Geneval, interrupting him;
 ' it would have been a wonder, indeed, if you
 ' had not contradicted me. It is mighty becoming
 ' a husband, who fancies his honour is at stake,
 ' if he does not thwart his wife on every occasion!'
 '—' Not in the least,' replied the gentleman
 ' of the household; ' you are stung for want of
 ' understanding him: your spouse is far from being
 ' of a different opinion on this point. Does not
 ' his conduct give you daily proofs of it? Can
 ' you imagine that, if he were really serious
 ' in what he says, he would allow you such an
 ' unbounded liberty?'—' A continuation of your
 ' long silence, Sir,' replied Madame De Geneval
 ' very sharply, ' would have been much more
 ' acceptable than the part you are pleased to
 ' take in the conversation.' The gentleman, not
 ' the best bred person in the world, took her up
 ' as smartly on his side; and, like many others,
 ' who, when they have got footing in the house,
 ' take upon them to controul at large, indulged
 ' a malicious pleasure in maintaining the argument
 ' with equal vehemence. The mistress of the
 ' house, exceedingly haughty, apprehending
 ' possibly the consequences of such a dispute,
 ' and provoked besides at the little ceremony
 ' with which she was treated, and her husband's
 ' not silencing her opponent, addressed herself
 ' to him with bitter reproaches for want of
 ' tenderness in her regard; declaring, that for
 ' the future she should take proper methods,
 ' and the moment certain countenances appeared—
 ' Being apprehensive, from the sharpness
 ' of the gentleman's reply, that the conversation
 ' was growing still warmer, I thought it high
 ' time to retire. Madame De Geneval was too

much taken up in retorting the sarcastical
 replies of the gentleman and her husband,
 to perceive I was gone. But Monsieur De
 Geneval, more attentive to what passed,
 left his friend to pursue or drop the
 argument, and came after me to present
 his hand, making an apology for the scene,
 of which I had been a spectator. ' She is
 very silly,' said he, speaking of his wife;
 ' a trifle discomposes her, and makes her
 ' exceptions. I overlook it all, as she is with
 ' child: when she is so, her humour is
 ' unaccountable; but, in consideration of her
 ' condition, some complaisance must be
 ' shewn.' I commended Monsieur De Geneval
 for his moderation, but blamed him at the
 same time for suffering the gentleman to
 divert himself in provoking his wife. To
 this he replied, that he was an old friend,
 whose characteristick was never to yield in
 a dispute; that he was so well known for
 it, that nobody ever resented his obstinacy.
 Upon this he told me an odd story. This
 very gentleman was deeply in love with a
 young lady, who on every account was a
 very proper match for him, and the affair
 on the point of being concluded. It
 happened very luckily, that he invited his
 future father-in-law, after signing the
 writings, to supper. The conversation
 turning upon the ceremonies observed at
 the marriages of the ancients, the old
 gentleman and his future son-in-law,
 neither of whom wanted wit or learning,
 enlivened the discourse with many
 interesting passages and curious citations;
 but the spirit of contradiction, the
 predominant passion in Geneval's friend,
 soon made the old gentleman lose his
 patience: it is true, he yielded for some
 time, apprehending his memory might
 fail him, till the son-in-law, who had
 been bred a scholar, falling upon a point
 in divinity, which the old gentleman
 happened perfectly to recollect, he
 maintained his ground. The young one
 contradicted him: the other, positive that
 he was right, ran home to his library,
 brought the book, and imagined he had
 carried his point; but the son-in-law
 disclaimed both the author and the
 edition. This obstinacy provoked the
 young lady's father so much, that he
 retired without any ceremony. Upon
 this, their friends interposed, and
 endeavoured to make up the breach. The
 old gentleman, the most reasonable of
 the two, was not averse to an accommo-
 dation,

dation, and only insisted that his future son-in-law should acknowledge himself to have been mistaken: but Geneval's friend chose rather to lose a very advantageous match than purchase it at so dear a rate.

This whimsical story amused me the more, as having just experienced, that the hero of it was very well qualified to furnish many such adventures. After some reflections on it, Geneval left me. I ordered the servant to light him down, and then shut myself into my apartment, with a firm resolution of avoiding, as much as possible, such an odd medley of company.

I was going to bed, when I heard somebody knock at the door. Curious to know what important affair could occasion a visit at one in the morning, I went to the window. In order not to be seen, I bid the maid carry the candles out of the room. I discovered a footman holding a flambeau, by whose glimmering light I perceived a tall man standing at the door, which was just opened. Upon listening, I heard him ask the maid, if a young lady did not lodge there, who arrived but that very day. Finding by the answer that he was not mistaken, he enquired if she was up, and could be spoke with. The maid, who had been present at supper when her mistress gave an account of the duke's visit, answered the stranger very roughly, that the person he enquired after was not to be seen, especially by night, and so shut the door upon him.

I thought it likewise time to draw in, lest, if I should be seen, the person might insist upon speaking with me.

I went to bed without reflecting on this accident, persuaded as I was that it had been occasioned by the visit intended me at supper-time.

It is with some confusion I own the profound tranquillity with which I slept till ten in the morning, as if I had not the least reason to be uneasy. Such is giddy youth, almost void of reflection! My waiting-woman came to acquaint me that a mantua-maker and other work-women waited my rising. I was inconsiderate enough to ask if she had sent for them. She answered with some surprise, that I had given her no such orders, but that the people said they came by appointment. This made me

presently imagine that M. De Saint Fal, with his usual foresight, was the contriver of this piece of gallantry. I got up, was taken measure of for stays and gowns, without examining any farther, which I judged could be of no manner of service, nor alter their opinion of me one way or other.

The clock had struck one; I was sitting down to table, (for my house affairs were as well regulated the first day as if I had been settled ten years) when M. De Saint Fal sent his name. He was richly dressed: I had not till then considered his person with any attention. Notwithstanding my affections were prejudiced in favour of another, I could not be so unjust as not to look upon him as a very accomplished person. His address was even more respectful than usual: a nice conduct, to avoid reminding me how much I was beholden to him. Whilst my waiting-woman was present, he constantly employed the word *Madam*, and only talked of general things. I insisted on his sitting down to dinner, which he complied with. As soon as we were alone, he began by expressing the pleasure he had in seeing me, and the apprehension he was under lest time should hang heavy on my hands in a strange place. Upon this I related to him all that had passed since he left me: I described the supper, acquainted him with the duke's intended visit, not omitting the debate which ensued on that occasion. I could not prevail upon myself to hide my suspicion of Madame De Geneval's ill-temper. His answer to this was, that the being obliged to provide a lodging for me on a sudden, prevented his taking a whole house; that it was not yet too late; and while he was looking out for one, he advised me to avoid La Geneval's company as much as possible.

It was with the greatest difficulty imaginable that I took the count off this subject. He did not relish the duke's visit; the stranger who enquired after me at midnight gave him no small uneasiness. He took heart, however, when I gave my word to avoid all visits, and the occasions of them, so far even as not to amuse myself at the window for the future. Saint Fal appeared as much transported at this promise, as if I had acquainted him with the most agreeable piece of news he could have wished to hear.

hear. He confessed he did not dare to ask such a favour, lest I should look upon it as a restraint on my liberty.

Resuming his usual tranquillity, he came at last to the point which concerned me most. I had already asked several times whether he had seen my lover's father, without receiving any answer; but now he gave me an account of a smart conversation, whereof I was the subject. 'Would you believe,' said M. De Saint Fal, 'that the old marquis could scarce be persuaded you had escaped out of my hands? He would be informed of the time, place, and other circumstances. In order to detect me, he sent for my valet de chambre, and questioned him apart in his closet, to try if we both agreed in the same story. In a word, I never saw him in such a passion before; but all his precautions gave me no uneasiness, being prepared on all hands, by giving my servant his instructions, and being well assured he would not betray me.'

'As to my uncle, though he threatened to go himself to the place, he has not as yet proceeded any farther in the affair; his anger is over, or at least he pretends as much. He was very inquisitive as to your beauty, character, and every thing which regarded you. I need not say, I did you justice,' continued the count; 'on such a subject could any one have been reserved! The description of your person was called over several times; from whence I judged he recollected what had passed in the village where he waited for his horses. The confusion into which his first onset threw me, made me forget what you had related concerning that affair, and I gave him an exact likeness of you.'

'This conformity set him on thinking. "If I am not mistaken," cried he, "there is no room to wonder at my son's passion for this girl!" I pretended to be surprized at the exclamation; but the old marquis, either because he mistrusted me, or was unwilling to let me know his sentiments, changed the discourse, and I retired exceedingly pleased with extricating myself so well out of this ticklish affair.'

The assurance Saint Fal gave, that his uncle's indignation seemed appeased, made me something easy. 'Whatever

reason I have to believe that to be the case,' continued the count, 'I shall be continually on my guard: we have a subtle, crafty politician to deal with; and lest he should impose upon me, I shall be very careful not to give him any handle for suspecting the sincerity with which I have pretended to act in this affair. Upon this account, I never left him since yesterday; to-morrow he goes to Paris, and I shall take the opportunity of his absence, to spend the day, lovely Jenny, with you, in order to settle your little affairs.'

The word *settle* reminded me of what this generous person had already done for me. 'Good God, Sir!' replied I, 'what will you think of me! I am, as you may see, in the greatest confusion imaginable, for being so backward in making my acknowledgments for your favours, of which I have a far greater sense than I can possibly express.'— 'Ah, Mademoiselle!' cried Saint Fal, interrupting me, 'your bare remembering them is too great a return; I beg we may say no more of such trifles.'— 'I look upon them in a far different light,' replied I; 'but still some melancholy reflections overpower my gratitude, and give me very cruel alarms. I have already said,' continued I, 'that all the grandeur of the world shall never draw me from the rules I have prescribed to myself; and if your views——' 'No; once for all,' replied Saint Fal in the sincerest manner, 'my word and honour is your security, the which, assure yourself, I am not capable of violating; and I consent to be looked upon as the worst of mankind, if ever any behaviour of mine contradicts this protestation I have the honour of making to you.'— 'On these terms,' replied I, very much encouraged, 'I shall take a pleasure in seeing you, and abstracting from the sentiments you have formerly expressed, so opposite to those in my own breast, I should take a pleasure in not hiding any thing from you.'— 'Alas!' cried the count with great earnestness, 'let that be no hindrance; on the contrary, charming Jenny! such a confidence would afford me the greatest consolation: how happy should I be to possess it! The effects of love are as various as the persons it influences, and in me widely different from what

they are in others. I was always of opinion, that to love for one's own sake merited no return: for it is properly self-love, where one's own happiness is the end pursued; as it is self-interest, not that of the object beloved, which is consulted. The proof of a disinterested passion, is to promote the happiness of a mistress, even in opposition to our own desires: judge, then, too lovely creature, what kind of passion I entertain in your regard; it is your satisfaction, it is your own happiness I study. Yes, continued the count, seizing my hands, 'you shall see me strive as eagerly to promote your union with him you love, as if my own happiness immediately depended on it. It is true, in losing you I lose all that is dear to me in life; but I shall have the comfort of reflecting, that in point of disinterestedness and generosity I stand unrivalled.'

Sentiments so delicate, so refined, and so new to me, raised an admiration that silence alone could express. 'Ah! can you doubt my sincerity?' continued the count. 'You make me no answer. Will you exclude me from the confidence you mentioned, one of the favours, alas! I can only expect? The sentiments I have just now expressed, however commendable in the theory, you perhaps imagine impracticable. My behaviour thus far, my late protestations, all betray some secret views. Yes, such I have, too charming creature! Shall I acknowledge them?' continued Saint Fal rising up; 'will you be convinced of what I have said, if I pour out the secret motions of my soul?'—'Well, then,' replied I terribly alarmed, 'what is it you hope for? You ought to know me, and consequently not to flatter yourself that I should ever—' 'Ah, Mademoiselle!' cried Saint Fal, interrupting me, 'hear what I have to say; do not suspect that, under an apparent probity, a villain lies hid! I love you, I adore you! your charms have vanquished me, and to preserve you, I would sacrifice rank and fortune a thousand times over; but I would owe this happiness to your own choice, and not to any importunity of mine. I am persuaded that, had not your inclination for my cousin prevented me, I might one day have been so happy as to gain your favour; but the probity on which I

value myself, and my singular way of thinking, have reigned in my passion, though not extinguished my hope: on this is regulated my present conduct; and that which I shall observe till Fate shall leave me no possibility of possessing you. Not that I wish the marquis may change; and much less, that death should ravish him from you: knowing, as I do, and in the sentiments I profess, it would be desiring your unhappiness. But the events of life are so various, and so continually subject to change, that such a thing may naturally happen: in either of these unfortunate cases, may I not reasonably hope that you would one day call to mind the purity of my sentiments, the services I had done, or at least endeavour to have done; and that then presenting a heart, which I may venture to say would not have been disagreeable, had you not been prejudiced in favour of another, you would crown a passion that never was inspired to be unfortunate?'

The count's last words were uttered with so much tenderness, that I was greatly affected. 'You are not mistaken,' replied I with some emotion, and yielding one of my hands, which Saint Fal bathed with his tears; 'you are not mistaken in relying on my gratitude. I will say more: were not my affections already engaged, I know no one but yourself could succeed in fixing them.'—'For the present this suffices,' cried Saint Fal, throwing himself at my feet; 'I am less wretched: this acknowledgement affords relief, and transports me. How, charming Jenny! may I flatter myself—' 'Heavens! what do I hear?' cried a voice from the door, which was half open; 'I am betrayed! Perfidious creature! I will never see thee more.'

The sound of the voice, the cruel apostrophe, the sudden disappearing of him who spoke, the posture the count was in when I was surprized, all together, made me start up and fly to the door. 'Alas, I am undone!' cried I, discovering the marquis as he made off. This unexpected apparition struck such a terror into me, that I must have sunk upon the floor, had not a sofa luckily received me. Saint Fal, no less surprized than myself, ran to my assistance. 'Ah, Sir!' cried I, 'leave me, and follow your kinsman: he believes me guilty,

'guilty, and detests me; of all which you are the cause. O Heavens! I am quite exhausted; I am plunged in despair.'

Saint Fal did not hesitate a moment: he ran down stairs, and presently overtook the marquis. I would fain have got on my feet to prevent a quarrel, which their high words gave me too much reason to apprehend, but the agony I was in rendered it impracticable. My waiting-woman came up in a violent agitation: she put the finishing hand to my misfortunes, by acquainting me, that Saint Fal and an officer, as she called the marquis, were gone out disputing; and, by the fury visible in the marquis's countenance, she really believed a duel would ensue. At this terrible news I exerted myself, and ran to the window to bring them back; but, alas! they were so far gone, that it would have been in vain to call after them.

'Ah, Heavens!' cried I, not observing I betrayed myself before a servant I had no reason to confide in, 'what will become of me, if I lose all that is dear to me in this life!—Go, Mademoiselle,' said I to my woman; 'lose not a moment! run, and endeavour to bring them back!'—'God forbid!' replied Brochan, with an air of disdain; 'it would be very fine, truly, to see young women running after such sparks. If I had imagined I was hired to be engaged in these kind of adventures, I would never have darkened the doors.' After this comfortable harangue she left the room, muttering to herself, but so loud as to let me hear several shocking expressions.

Let any one imagine the condition I was in! I knew not what to do. 'If I go after them,' said I to myself, 'to what purpose? Put the case, I reach them whilst they are engaged, as they certainly are, ought not I to apprehend my presence will only serve to redouble the marquis's fury, and hasten some tragical event? He thinks me perfidious; what effect can my prayers have on him? Again, how shall I be looked upon here?' I reflected, that though the prying Madame De Geneval should happen not to be at home when the marquis and Saint Fal went out, I must expect that prude Brochan would not fail to inform her of all that had passed. What would not be the consequence? Women, especially those of my landlady's character,

show no mercy on such occasions. In fine, I knew not which way to turn myself. Sometimes I relied on Saint Fal's prudence and sincere attachment to me; then again all hope vanished, when I considered him vigorously attacked, as I had reason to think, and under an absolute necessity of defending himself. I walked about my room in a violent agitation, musing on all these particulars; when, to complete my misfortunes, La Geneval, notwithstanding her former politeness, entered without the least ceremony, and asked very hastily the meaning of what she had just been informed of; adding, something drily, she would not for the world any untoward affair should happen, wherein her name could be brought in question: she told me, her house was not designed for such purposes; and that she took it heinously ill, that M. De Saint Fal should expose her house to any such inconveniences.

To all this I answered not a word: I was so confounded, that I could not devise the least pretence to give a favourable turn to what I was reproached with. La Geneval, taking my silence for a tacit acknowledgment of what she thought of me, perhaps confirmed in it by the remarks of my devout waiting-woman, continued her discourse in so high a strain, with so many bitter taunts and expressions, so very ill-timed, that not being much prejudiced in her favour, I took her up very short for her impertinence; telling her, with a piercing look, to leave my room, that I waited for the count's return, and should not fail to acquaint him with the civilities I had received in the apartment he chose for me, and where I had expected to be safe from any insult. This was uttered with so much resolution, that she durst not make any reply. Her husband, who came in and heard part of what I said, asked very earnestly if any of his family had behaved otherwise than with respect. I thanked him very coldly for his concern, and perceiving his wife was going to open again, I retired to my closet, throwing the door after me; there I burst into tears, and lost myself in a train of reflections, surpassing each other in the anguish they occasioned.

Abandoned thus to myself, I looked upon what had happened, as a punishment for accepting of Saint Fal's offer. 'It would have been much better,' said I to myself, 'to have gone to a mona-

stery,

flery, which would have answered all purposes: Love and Reason might have gone hand in hand; the old Marquis perhaps would have desisted from persecuting me. I must have suffered, it is true, from my aversion to a cloister; but virtue, being free from any alarms, would have afforded some comfort, in representing me bemoaned and valued by a lover truly dear, and whose preservation was of such consequence. This day my ruin is completed!' continued I, shedding a torrent of tears. 'What will he not think! What has he not room to imagine! He finds me in the hands of another; however innocent I may be, he surprizes him at my feet. Appearances are against me; he will never return.

Three hours were spent in the most melancholy situation; no account of what had passed, which my imagination represented very tragical. The strict honour of Saint Fal was too notorious, not to render it more than probable. I could not forbear thinking he must have perished in the combat, since he thus left me a prey to racking uncertainty: this notion gathering strength, let me into the consequences of such a terrible affair. It was natural to expect being seized, and made responsible for what my imagination represented to have happened, as the cause, though very innocent of the quarrel: in this case I had no room to flatter myself; on the contrary, it was reasonable to suppose I should find no favour, but meet with the severest treatment.

Such just alarms produced other reflections. I thought it high time to consider seriously what I had to do. Flight seemed the best grounded, as well as safest, and which consequently I resolved on. Money I did not want, (for I forgot to mention a purse of gold I found in the commode;) but I repeat it once more, I was no longer that Jenny, mistress of so much resolution in any adventure: plenty, ease, consulting my inclinations, had instilled all the terrors and weakness usual with young women of quality; I was even afraid of being left alone; I loved to be at my ease, and the apprehension of being otherwise gave me no small anxiety. A service I could not think of with patience: and yet the only means which presented themselves, were a service, or to work

for a livelihood. What could I set about? I knew nothing, and could scarce wait on myself. It signified nothing to debate the thing; a thousand obstacles opposed themselves to what my virtue pointed out: it did not yield, indeed, but maintained it's ground; yet, sullied as it was by so many concurring accidents, it no longer cast forth those bright rays it had formerly done, when not weighed down with the follies of the age. I saw plainly my wretched condition, and bewailed it: but that was all; I came to no resolution.

It was now near ten at night, and nothing determined. I knew not which way to turn myself; overwhelmed as I was, I never thought of eating. My cook-maid, (who was mightily taken with me from the first, and whose good-nature, which far surpassed that of my waiting-woman, made her more considerate and attentive) came to look for me in my closet. I shall make no difficulty to enter into a detail of what passed between us, as it proved afterwards to be of consequence. 'Lady of ours!' said she very innocently, 'do people live here on the air? Why, your supper has been ready these two hours. Jesu-Maria!' cried she, holding her candle to my face, 'you are all in tears! Can persons at your age have any thing to trouble them? Mercy on us! what will become of others, when such sweet babes take things to heart? Just Heavens! I am rarely fitted, truly; out of the frying-pan into the fire: my last mistress was always grumbling, growling, snarling, and throwing things about; this here cries like a child! Patience; every one has their humour. But, in plain truth, what makes you take on thus? You want for nothing. Have you not a good lodging, well furnished; a large income? As for youth or beauty, Heaven be praised, we need not go from home: so that you are much to be pitied truly! Pies on't, what would you do if you were in my place, simple as I stand here? Gracious Saviour!' continued the good-natured creature, with tears in her eyes, 'I warrant ye, all this is for the loss of her husband! Well, he is gone, and there is an end on't. For one cold one, there are a thousand warm ones. We shan't miss our market; we live, Heaven

'ven be praised, in a country where they are as plentiful as the miseries of a kitchen-wench!'

I could not forbear smiling at my maid's comparisons and manner of comforting me. I told her, however, to leave me, and that I did not intend to eat. 'Then I must e'en fast too,' continued she; 'for it would not be right in me to regale whilst my good mistress is in affliction. Well, well, it won't kill me; if I go without my supper to-night, I'll eat two to-morrow.' Barbara (for that was her name) left me saying this. Her compassion moved me; I called her back, and ordered her to go to supper. 'Come, then,' said she, 'we'll compound the matter: if you'll but sup a porringer of broth, I'll undertake to eat as much as any four in the parish; otherwise I can out-fast our curate, the greatest penitentiary in all the country, and a very good man, if he did not love money, and here and there a pretty girl: you know what I mean. If it were not for such little fooleries, they say, he might have been a saint long ago; but, like the rest of the world, he loves himself: and, after all, he may not be so much to blame as people pretend.'

I endeavoured a second time to send Barbara away, losing all patience through her nonsense. When we are under affliction, every thing incommodes us; but this day I was destined to be embroiled. 'Be gone!' said I very hastily; 'do you think I have nothing to do but——' 'Well, Madam, I am gone,' said she, without stirring an inch; 'I see foul weather gathering, and you must be obeyed. How one may be deceived! I could have sworn, with so much good-nature in your face, you would never be angry: but they say, one should never judge of people by their looks; and I fancy, when you have a mind, you can scold as well as another. Heavens be praised! women of my rank,' that was her expression, 'are born to suffer. I lived with one Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, who, like you——' 'Mademoiselle D'Elbieux!' cried I, struck with the name; 'where is she?'—'Why, are you acquainted with her?' answered Barbara. 'No,' said I, dissembling the truth; 'but a friend of mine knows her.'—'So much the better, if you

are not acquainted,' replied Barbara; 'she is a malicious miss, or lady, which you please, now she is married: our village has a good riddance of her; she plagued us out of our lives when she came to pass the summer there, which was only every year.'—'What is the name of your village?' said I, extremely surprized that what I heard should agree so well with the place of my birth. 'If you imagine I have forgot, Madam,' replied Barbara, 'you are mistaken; my memory is not so short, nor is it so long since I came from thence: it is called D——; and though the least in the forest of Fontainebleau, it is not behind-hand with the best of them; a perfect little paradise on earth. I long to end my days there: but patience! all in good time, if God grants my life; every thing has it's day; something must be laid up to prevent starving. We are poor folks, it is true, but very honest; and our family, God be praised! has nothing to reproach itself with, except one of my nieces, who has made noise enough, and they say will make her fortune: but there is not one of us would be in her place; for it is a proverb in our village, *More honour and less money; a good name is better than a golden girdle.*'

Upon this she went away. Let any one imagine the consternation I was in to find my cook-maid to be my own aunt; for by what she said, she was my father's sister. This is one of those accidents, which are least expected, and make the deepest impression. I could have wished to have entered a little more into particulars with this good-natured simple relation; but I thought it proper to take another opportunity of asking abundance of questions, which occurred. My head was too much perplexed to take the necessary precautions prudence would suggest, in order to prevent betraying myself in such a conversation.

Good-natured Barbara, or rather my aunt, presently brought me a porringer of broth. I received it in an obliging manner, and behaved to her with great tenderness. She went away, swearing I had pleased her better than if I had bestowed an Agnus on her: this was saying a great deal for her, being very fond of relicks, though her devotion was well ordered, and no way resembling

bling the precise severity of Mademoiselle Brochan, my cross-grained waiting-woman.

I was no sooner left alone, but I was buried again in reflections. Various projects were formed in my disturbed imagination: sometimes I was for discovering myself without ceremony to my aunt, and going back with her to the village; the next moment, I was for retiring to a monastery, and concealing myself so well, as never to be heard of more; then, again, I resolved to write to Madame De G——, or to go to her, and beg to be received as a servant. In a word, twenty different schemes presented themselves, but I had not courage to fix upon any one of them.

My last resolution, after a long struggle, was to go to Paris, and shut myself up in some room, where I might learn to work, till I had recovered myself sufficiently to determine what was to be done. This resolution taken, I dried up my tears, and then began a letter to the marquis: I justified myself in a handsome manner, and concluded with assuring him, that since he had thought fit to suspect my conduct, he should never see me more.

In the same packet I inclosed another directed to Monsieur De Saint Fal, where I returned him thanks for all his civilities, and assured him, that whatever befel me, they should always be fresh in my memory. I told him, that it was with the greatest regret I deprived myself of so generous and disinterested a friend; and added, that I should do him the justice to flatter myself, that notwithstanding what the world might think fit to say of me, he would scorn to condemn me on bare appearances, as his kinsman had done. This offence provoked me so much, that it was frequently mentioned in both my letters.

I was going to seal them. My design was to leave them on my toilette; to pretend the next morning to take the air; to lock up my apartment, and send the keys to generous Saint Fal, that he might withdraw his effects; and after these proper measures, to take a place in the coach for Paris: I was beginning, I say, to order these affairs, when my aunt came hastily into the room, telling me to dry up my tears; that she had learned the occasion of them from Madame De Geneval's servant; that I had

nothing to do but to be merry, for that the danger I apprehended was all over. I asked Barbara, with great earnestness, from whence she had learned all this. 'Here,' said she, pointing to Saint Fal and the marquis, who that moment entered the room; 'here is a convincing proof of what I say. God be praised, you are easy, and that witch Brochan's heart will burst with spleen!'

I gave no attention to what she said: the marquis was at my feet; he had seized my hands; endeavoured to speak, but was not able, nor was I to prevent his caresses; my tears alone could force their way, no despicable language on such an occasion.

Saint Fal was still silent; leaning on the back of my chair, from whence I had not power to rise, he seemed to wait the result of the first emotion. 'I have brought you back,' said he to me, 'a tender and a faithful lover. Appearances imposed on him but for a moment, and I had no difficulty in convincing him how deserving you are of his affections. Twenty times he has blushed to think he could suspect your conduct; and we should have been here four hours ago, had we not met with my uncle. I easily foresaw how much you must suffer from your apprehensions, and should have sent word of our being prevented from waiting immediately on you, through fear of giving the old marquis any room to suspect us, but that we thought such a commission of too great consequence to be entrusted with a stranger.'

'Recover yourself, then, Mademoiselle; dry up your tears, and enjoy without disturbance the pleasure of seeing a lover again, who deserves you, as well for his honourable intentions, as by the greatness of his passion.' Saying this, Saint Fal left us, promising me to return the next day. He went, as he said, to meet his uncle, in order to give the marquis an opportunity of discoursing with me. My heart was so full, and so much affected with the presence of a lover too dear to me, that I was scarce able to return a bow to this generous friend.

At any other time, I would not have been left alone with the marquis; but then I was in a different way of thinking. I felt a secret joy to find myself acquitted in his mind, and wished to hear it confirmed. My tears were no longer

longer the effect of despair; the trouble I was in seemed a pleasing kind of melancholy, and afforded a satisfaction. How delightful must that pleasure be which comes in the room of misfortunes that were expected! This period of my life is never reflected on but with the utmost content.

The moment I am writing such an interesting passage of my Memoirs, this admired lover, this husband, in whom I am now happy, surprizes me in my closet. He smiles at my perplexity in properly expressing so momentous an epoch. He says he will assist my memory on this occasion. He takes the pen; he writes; he will not be refused: though he were not so dear to me as he really is, he must be obeyed. Thus, indulgent reader, or severe critick, you must not wonder, if the style in the following sheets is not always alike: the Marquis of L. V. is so complaisant as to assist me often in the execution of this work. I am sensible this digression, as well as my frank confession above, is not entirely according to rule; but is there any to be observed when the heart speaks? I should chuse to break through it, rather than lose an opportunity of mentioning the most amiable of husbands. But, to return.

I was so transported, as I mentioned above, to see a lover again whom I gave over for lost, that I never thought till now of making him rise. I used my utmost endeavours to prevail on him to change so painful a posture; but, pressing my hands, he answered, 'No, charming Jenny, I will die at your feet, if you refuse to pardon the cruel outrage I have committed. I acknowledge myself the worst of mankind. I thought you capable of perfidy; I imagined my cousin in possession of that only treasure I covet, and after which I have sighed so long. Alas! what did I not think? How difficult is it to be impartial when in love! I own such suspicions are highly criminal; I repeat it: I ought to have known you, and that alone should have prevented my indulging a jealousy, which appearances hurried to an extremity.'

What did not my heart feel whilst the marquis made his apology! How gracefully did he acquit himself! A heart of marble must have been moved at what he said on that subject. Happy are those

young women whose inbred virtue and modesty are their guard, or severe education supplies the want of such happy dispositions! Without one of these restraints, I know not (with confusion I speak it) how far I might have indulged myself. The blushes arising from these too endearing reflections, were looked upon by the marquis as the marks of a resentment still subsisting. A second time he asked if I forgave him. 'Yes, my lord,' answered I, hiding my face, 'I do: at the same time let me beseech you to forget the vexation my listening to the count, your kinsman's advice, has perhaps occasioned; I am sensible I ought to have been the first to engage him in a punctual compliance with your father's designs; but that very inclination, that over-ruling deference, at the same time instilled a horror against a convent, which necessarily implied an absolute separation from you. It is that very passion which you have inspired, and has been but too much cherished, that endangered my forfeiting your esteem by some indiscretions.'—'No, adorable Jenny!' replied the marquis, seating himself by me, 'you are no way to blame: ruin on your side, and despair on mine, must have been the inevitable consequence of your falling into my father's hands. His design was to shut you up for life. His measures were so well concerted, and his orders would have been so punctually obeyed, that I must have lost you for ever. All this I learned but the other day: a servant of my father's, in whom he much confides, knowing my very life lay at stake, let me into the secret. I took post immediately upon it, and came but a few hours too late. Imagine the despair which seized me, when coming to Madame De G——, I found you gone. She was moved at my condition; and it was from her I learned Saint Fal's commission: she had the precaution to engage my word of honour, or I would have risked my life in extorting from him the place where he had left you. I dissembled with him; set spies upon him; in fine, discovered his haunts. It was I who came last night to enquire for you: to speak the truth, all these practices, the neglect or rather contempt of my father's orders; the remaining at Versailles, this lodging, all together, turn-

ed my head. "Ah!" cried I to myself, "I am betrayed! Saint Fal has taken advantage of the authority put into his hand; Jenny was terrified with it: my cousin is handsome; and Jenny, perhaps, unfaithful." This notion, throwing me into despair, made me watch Saint Fal all night. When he came to Versailles, I endeavoured to sift him, but not getting any thing out of him (for you was not then arrived) I blamed my own suspicions. Thinking you was in some monastery, I began to resolve upon coming to extremities, and breaking my word, in order to force Saint Fal to discover where you were secured. With this design, I endeavoured to find him out; but hearing he was gone the evening before, and not expecting to overtake him, I resolved to wait his return, and then revenge the evils he had brought upon me. Heaven was merciful, and ordered matters otherwise: going out of the park, whither I went to indulge my thoughtfulness, I had a sight of Saint Fal, walking with great emotion. I followed him, and found he entered here, by which means I discovered your lodging.

This part of the uneasiness, lovely Jenny, you made me undergo. But judge of my despair, when coming up to an elderly woman, who waits on you, and to whom I addressed myself to let you know I was at the door, I learned from her, that you saw nobody; that the preceding evening a nobleman had been refused; and that Saint Fal alone had admittance. I would have told my name, and persuaded her to let me in. She replied, that the count and you were alone, and she did not think proper to interrupt you. All this was delivered in so mysterious a manner, as disturbed me very much. Ten louis-d'ors, proffered and accepted, removed all obstacles: the old woman, charmed at the sight of the gold, was so far from continuing refractory, that of her own accord she proposed concealing me, provided I gave my promise that I would never discover her complaisance, nor what she was going to impart to me. The more mystery she affected, the more my suspicions increased. Give me leave to pass over in silence the impertinence she was

guilty of in your regard.' Here I interrupted the marquis, and would know what a servant could pretend to say of me, with whom she had been but two days acquainted. It was with some difficulty the marquis satisfied me on this head; he owned that Brochan had given him to understand, that Saint Fal comforted me in my affliction for the loss of a husband, and upon that account I refused all other visits. 'Forgive me once more,' cried the marquis, seeing me moved at this detail; 'I know very well I ought not to have given the least credit to it; but one would imagine every thing conspired to involve me in guilt. I find Saint Fal at your feet; your expressions are endearing: he kisses your hand; you do not resent it. Could any man, as much in love as myself, calmly behold so interesting a scene? But what do I say? Ought I to be surprized that my cousin should wear your chains? or, rather, ought I not to expect as many rivals, as there are men who behold your charms?'

This discourse concluded with the tenderest marks of the most lively passion. The marquis expressed himself with so much ardour, as would not by any means admit of the least interruption: however, I gained so much over myself, as to refer the sequel of a conversation, which concerned me so nearly, to the next day, telling him it was past midnight, and that decency required he should retire. Ever complaisant and tractable, he obeyed, kissing my hand. I plainly perceived, by his countenance and address, that he wished for something more. I thought I might allow him a kiss, and turned my cheek to him; but with so much confusion, that he easily perceived it was the first favour I ever bestowed on any man, and for which he was entirely beholden to the sincerity of my passion.

The emotion, occasioned by so many different adventures, was too great to suffer me to enjoy that repose which might naturally arise from the endearing behaviour of the marquis. Hitherto I had been an entire stranger to that modish complaint of the ladies, called vapours; but this night I sufficiently experienced the violence of them, and it was day-break before I began to rest.

Tender Barbara came to wake me about two in the afternoon, alarmed at my

my profound sleep. She informed me that Saint Fal had called in the morning. I could not but admire his discretion; my simple aunt frankly owning it was not her fault, that he did not come into her bed-chamber; but he refused it, lest, as he said, my rest might be disturbed. We have not many instances of such moderation: the marquis has since owned, he should not have behaved so well.

I took this opportunity of remonstrating very mildly to my aunt, that decency required she should never suffer any one to come into my chamber when I was in bed. As she meant no harm, this was sufficient to make her promise to be more upon her guard for the future.

I was sitting down to dinner, when the marquis came in, more amiable than ever; his dress was exceedingly genteel, and the satisfaction visible in his countenance gave him so charming an air, as could not but with difficulty be withstood. His conversation was lively and affecting. I assured him, as often as he desired, of my reconciliation. How dear and fleeting are the moments spent with those we love! The clock struck four, when we had still a thousand things to say, and were so taken up with each other, that if Barbara had not reminded me of dinner, I should have passed the whole day without eating. The marquis made a thousand apologies for having undesignedly given occasion for this delay. I asked him with a smile, whether he would venture on such a meal as was ready. He was transported at my proposal, thinking himself much obliged. Barbara, whom I did not blush to call aunt, was ordered to serve up dinner immediately. We sat down to table; and love, as will easily be imagined, supplied the place of a third person. After dinner, we entertained each other with the detail of all that had passed since our separation. Adventures, reflections, nothing was omitted, not even Saint Agnes's history, which I related to the marquis, and the share I had in every thing which regarded that dear friend. My lover assured me, that, in consideration of our mutual friendship, he would employ all his interest for setting aside her vows, and seemed much concerned that I had not by me the letters entrusted to my care, for that he would have dispatched Dubois express to the Marquis with them, as they were directed, and

have heard some tidings of Melisbont. I informed the marquis into whose hands I had delivered them, and thence took an occasion of acquainting him with Lindamine's adventures. He had already heard of them, and expressed himself very much in her favour.

The conversation turned insensibly on Saint Fal. If jealousy were the standard of love, I ought to have been very well satisfied with the vivacity of the marquis's passion. He asked a thousand questions concerning that of his cousin: I answered them very sincerely. I discovered that the detail gave him pain; but, at the same time, I observed with pleasure, he did Saint Fal justice; even so far as to tell me, that Saint Fal's honour was so much to be relied on, that though he knew him to be his rival, and was himself inclined to be jealous, yet if my affairs required it, he should not hesitate a moment to leave me in his power. I answered with a smile, that my way of thinking was a sufficient governess. To which he replied with the same good-humour, he did not question it, but that his chief dependence was on the regard, he flattered himself, I had for him. I remember I looked on him, at that instant, with so much tenderness, that he might easily discern the natural modesty of the sex hid from him a part of what then passed in my breast.

The emotion I perceived in his eyes making me apprehensive lest my own had betrayed me, and he should reflect we were alone, I asked him, in order to divert his thoughts another way, whether he could, with as little difficulty, give an account of his own behaviour, as I had done of mine. 'What account can I give you,' replied the marquis, 'but of a great deal of impatience and vexation? Several copies of letters wrote to my charming Jenny, but prudentially suppressed?' 'Have a care,' replied I, looking very earnestly at him, 'what you say. I have been informed of a certain fair lady at Pont à Mousson who was altogether indifferent to you: that you found a good deal of amusement in these parts, and that another lady—' 'Good God!' cried the marquis, interrupting me and smiling, 'who could have told you all these stories? I know none but Dubois capable of making such blunders. He has been tiring you,

I sup-

I suppose, with the adventures that country furnished; and as they are frequent enough, he has brought me in by head and shoulders, in order to discover whether your regard for me would take the alarm.—‘A very notable turn, truly!’ cried I laughing. ‘This introduction to what you shall think fit to relate makes me—’ ‘Alas, lovely Jenny!’ replied the marquis very earnestly, ‘this is too serious a subject to jest with. Can you imagine, that where you possess the heart of one whose strict honour equals mine, there can be any room for other objects?’—‘I am willing, my lord,’ replied I, ‘to credit what you say; nevertheless, I shall not dispense with your giving a detail of your stay in Lorraine.’ I was very pressing on this subject. Whatever self love might dictate, I would not rely on the power of my charms; or perhaps I sought the pleasure of having a farther confirmation of a passion already so endearing. Be it as it will, my lover seeing me obstinately bent on hearing the relation, thought fit to satisfy my curiosity in the following words.

‘The detail of my adventures, charming Jenny, will not be very long. A profound melancholy seized me on my arrival in Lorraine: I seldom went out of my chamber except to church. Dubois, seeing me pine away, thought proper to engage me to take the air and see company. Finding me averse to what he proposed, and observing me to grow worse and worse, he applied to a physician of note in the town where we were, and entreated him to come to me. In order to prepare me for the reception, he said I might, if I pleased, bury myself alive; but that I could not refuse visits, and must expect them; though, according to the established custom, I ought to have prevented those who shewed me that civility.

‘The apprehension I was under, lest my valet de chambre should have made me guilty of ill-breeding, by inviting in my name any one to visit me, occasioned my giving him a severe reprimand. The gentry of those parts are people of worth, but very nice in point of punctilio; and I should have been unwilling to have given any offence, for several reasons. Dubois made me easy, by assuring me, that he was no

way blameable as to this particular, having only desired a physician to call upon me. At that instant the doctor sent in his name: he entered the room very genteelly; but I little expected so much pleasantry from him. His name is Le Lorrain, proper enough to remind him of the place of his birth. Instead of physick, this merry companion proposed a party of pleasure. He said, I was not fit to keep my chamber, but must take the air, to which the fine weather invited me: that his first prescription was, that I should go every day to a little box he had at a small distance, where I might possibly meet with good company; that good wine and fine women were admirable remedies in all hypochondriack cases. Every phrase was seasoned with a smile, and the tongue moistening his lips, served for commas and points. In a word, lovely Jenny, I never met with so jocular a physician. I was so taken with him, and his easy behaviour was so agreeable, that I made him dine with me. All the while we were at table, he entertained me with several diverting passages. In the evening we went to his country-house and found some good company. I did not perceive the ladies were in the least awkward, as they are generally represented: their dress was very fashionable; their accent, it is true, not so good as at Paris; nevertheless, I must own that, in point of good-breeding and politeness, they are no way inferior to the Parisians.

‘My physician dined with me the next day. He prescribed for me with his usual facetiousness, and for the first time I was prevailed upon to have recourse to an apothecary’s shop. I found great benefit from what I took, and never enjoyed a better state of health. It were to be wished that all our doctors behaved in this manner. Besides his great skill, he has the knack of putting his patients in good heart, which is at least half a cure.

‘In the affairs of life, the first step is all. Though melancholy, arising from your absence, hung upon me, yet I had a relish for company; but what chiefly drew me frequently to one particular house was, the near resemblance which the Countess de Charrée’s eldest daughter has of you, in every thing except her temper and

height: I thought I saw you when-
 ever I was in her company. This
 young lady's sisters are persons of
 great merit. Mademoiselle De Charée,
 the youngest, is made up of charms;
 her brother as fine a gentleman as
 any I know: the mother of this amia-
 ble family, to a great decorum, joins
 a graceful behaviour beyond imagi-
 nation. I must leave you to judge
 how well I was pleased with so en-
 gaging a family; and indeed I spent
 most of my time there with a select
 set of acquaintance: among the rest,
 I had the pleasure of Count De la Me-
 son's company; Mademoiselle De Sa-
 l  , his niece, made one in that groupe
 of beauties, and was no less distin-
 guished by her wit than her charms.

The most intimate of my acquain-
 tance, and who remain such, are Mes-
 sieurs De Gombervault, D'Atel, and
 Deslandres. I had been very inti-
 mate with a certain gentleman, named
 Saint Alu, a person of worth; but
 our friendship suffered from some ill-
 grounded suspicions, and was finally
 broke off by constructions as wrong
 made as understood.

The justifying my character to you,
 is of too great concern not to demand
 a succinct account of this rupture;
 perhaps you are not of the same opi-
 nion with me in an affair of this na-
 ture, and consequently may condemn
 my conduct. I always looked upon
 it as a principle, that whoever breaks
 with his friend, infringes the esta-
 blished laws of society. In consid-
 eration of the first engagements, every
 thing should be overlooked; but if
 those ties are to be laid aside, as in-
 compatible with honour and reputa-
 tion, a man should leave the world to
 do him justice, without the least at-
 tempt to do it himself; for whoever
 undertakes his own justification, after
 breaking with his friend, only endea-
 vours to prejudice in his favour all
 those he makes judges of his case:
 this he cannot effect without defam-
 ing his friend, and consequently com-
 mits a fault against a just delicacy of
 sentiments, his own choice, and self-
 interest; against proper sentiments,
 by putting himself into the woeful
 necessity of being an informer on one
 side, and his own panegyrist on the
 other; against his choice, by tacitly
 acknowledging himself mistaken in

choosing his friend; and, finally, against
 self-interest, by setting up judges, who
 may very possibly condemn his con-
 duct.

From what I have advanced, lovely
 Jenny, this may be gathered: that I
 blame any man who breaks with his
 friend; much more him who seeks to
 justify himself for doing it; but most
 of all, him who gives occasion to the
 rupture. However, when a man, with-
 out being wanting in those duties to
 which friendship obliges him, hap-
 pens to lose his friend through a ca-
 priciousness not to be excused, and
 the rupture, becoming publick, may
 tarnish his honour, or that esteem all
 polite people are fond of; then he
 may be allowed to justify his conduct,
 observing always the cautions before
 given, to prevent his character being
 called in question, and losing those
 favourable prejudices which introduce
 us to the sweets of civil society, or the
 secret springs that animate a reputa-
 tion of benevolence, to which we are
 allowed by honourable methods to
 aspire.

This last was exactly my case,
 dearest Jenny, at Pont-a-Mousson. I
 mentioned to you the great friendship
 between Monsieur De Saint Alu and
 me: it was really such. This inti-
 macy no longer subsists, and he pub-
 licly complains of me; he persists
 in it: he has gone farther; he endea-
 vours to make me feel the effects of
 his resentment; he has even employed
 the most powerful means to compiet
 my ruin; he does not give over all
 hopes of succeeding. I have been si-
 lent a long time; I have waited with
 patience: he openly attacks me; that
 is, he aims his blows by those hands
 I have the greatest reason to respect.
 Now, then, may not I be allowed to
 justify myself? I shall undertake to
 do it, strictly observing the rules of
 decency and politeness I have just now
 established, and from which I hope
 never to swerve.

This affair in question, discreet Jen-
 ny, is as nice as it is difficult to re-
 late. A formal accusation is laid
 against me; I am charged with a vio-
 lation of friendship in the most atro-
 cious manner. My innocence is my
 sole defence, and my honour my only
 evidence. Malice, ever predominant
 over charity, is on my adversary's
 side.

side. Against such an opposition, with what arms can I support my cause? Must I not naturally expect to fall under the weight? You alone, my charmer, can encourage me. If you pronounce sentence in favour of me and my sentiments, what may I not hope for from the goodness of my cause, and the indulgence of the public?

The greater preparation the marquis made for his adventure, the more impatient I was to hear the conclusion. He took so much pains to win me over, that I was twenty times upon the point of telling him, that if I was to be judge, all this would only contribute to determine me against him; but the fear of retarding a relation, whose introduction seemed to be of such importance, and wherein he appeared principally concerned, restrained me, and gave him an opportunity of pursuing his discourse in the following words.

At my arrival in Lorraine, I learned, with a great deal of pleasure, that M. De Saint Alu had taken up his residence there: I was overjoyed; we had been bred up together, and always very intimate.

We soon renewed our mutual friendship; and, excepting our not being in the same house, we were seldom apart, and might have been justly called the *inseparables*: we had no secrets for each other; our very thoughts were communicated.

There was a house in the town, where I visited with less ceremony than at other places; the freedom I there enjoyed was so agreeable, that I generally eat, or at least spent part of the day there. Saint Alu frequently reproached me for it: he was not upon very good terms with the provost's lady, (the mistress of the house) and at that time refused to do justice to the merits of her daughter.

She is an amiable person, has a great deal of wit, and exceeding fine parts. She was married very young, and in a few months became a widow. She might have married again very soon, if she had pleased: some accidents, foreign to my purpose, had interfered. Her bloom was in it's full lustre when I was first acquainted with her, and a slight knowledge of her sufficed to secure one's esteem and interest in her behalf.

Saint Alu knew there was such a person from the time he settled in the town, but had made no acquaintance with her. What I had advanced concerning the agreeableness of her conversation, surprized him, and created a desire of being able to judge for himself. I introduced him: he was received as an amiable person, and it was not long before he gained their esteem.

He had scarce frequented the house a month, when he fell desperately in love with the young widow; his merit had it's usual success, and his courtship was not rejected.

In fine, notwithstanding some opposition, the match he so earnestly desired was at last concluded, and he put in possession of the happiness he sought.

This wedding was so far from making any alteration in our friendship, that it was rather increased. Saint Alu could not live without me, as he often said. We were continually together, and being willing on my side to shew a grateful sense of such an endearing deference, I spent whole days with the new-married couple, and thought myself extremely happy.

Nevertheless, perceiving, after some months, that my friend was inclined to jealousy, I managed my visits with discretion, and often absented myself under various pretences. For some time Saint Alu was satisfied with the plausible reasons I alledged for not seeing him so frequently; but, too quick-sighted not to suspect the real cause, after some time he explained himself; and, without allowing me to make a reply to a very obliging speech, he forced me to promise I would see him as often as formerly.

I could not hold out against his intreaties; they were so pressing, and accompanied with such frankness, that I imagined the laws of friendship obliged me to desist from my first design.

In small towns, assemblies are much in vogue: the leisure which abounds there makes time pass heavily; to remedy which, gaming is of infinite service, by keeping up correspondences, which could not subsist without that interesting *primum mobile*. Lanquenet was played every night at M. Saint Alu's: this amusement drew

the whole town thither; and as they were well received, and much at their ease in his house, good company was never wanting, and it was generally late before they parted.

One day Saint Alu sent a footman in the morning, to desire I would spend that day with him, intimating he would not be denied: it was a festival and very cold weather. I went immediately to his house, where he waited for me to go to church; accordingly we went with his lady. After dinner, we fell to play, and supped all three in the best humour imaginable: Saint Alu was very gay, and sure enough I had little reason to expect what immediately happened.

Just as we rose from table, some friends came in, who usually were there early to begin play. As people cannot talk always, Saint Alu, who has a fine hand on the viol, took up the instrument, and entertained the company with several pieces of music: they heard him with great pleasure. I took this opportunity to leave the room, having been shut up the whole day, in order to enjoy the fresh air, and a few moments reflection upon you, my dearest Jenny! When we have any thing at heart, solitude is agreeable; and, as it presented itself, I willingly embraced it.

To go to the room in which we played, one was obliged to go through Madame De Saint Alu's apartment. I mentioned before the coldness of the weather. I had not been long in the court, before I was pierced with the frosty air. I knew there was a good fire in the room where the company was expected: I went thither; the door was open, and thinking I was alone, I shut it after me.

The candles were not lighted, which occasioned my error, having no other light than what the fire afforded. It must be observed, that in this room there was a bed, with the curtains drawn about it: it was designed for a friend who was expected that night.

I was standing very quietly with my back to the fire, thinking quite of another thing than an affair of gallantry, when I heard somebody groan. Surprized at this, I asked who was there. A voice, which I knew to be Madame De Saint Alu's, called me. "I am extremely ill," said she; "I found

myself chilly, and the fire has struck the cold up to my head; I am fainting away."

I ran hastily to her assistance. (Admire, dear Jenny, my unlucky stars!) The very instant I stooped down to raise her off the ground, the door was thrown open, and Saint Alu appeared. He started back at seeing us. "Heavens!" cried he, "what's this? I am betrayed! my wife is false, and you are a villain and a treacherous friend!" This reproach, which I had so little reason to expect, bereaved me of a presence of mind sufficient for my own justification. My silence, without doubt, confirmed his suspicions: when I would have made him sensible of his mistake, it was too late; his jealousy blinded him, he would hear nothing; he roared in a horrible manner, calling us by all the vile names his fury could suggest. What was to be done? Reason was lost on him: it was to no purpose to represent to him that the company in the next apartment, alarmed by his noise, would come in upon us, and be witnesses of this unfortunate misunderstanding. He would not be appeased, his passion blinded him, and he ran headlong on his ruin. I thought it best for me, in such cruel circumstances, to retire, which I did immediately. What I had foreseen happened accordingly; it was the hour for the assembly to meet, the stair-case was crowded with company, and the whole affair came out.

They asked me the meaning of the outcries they heard; I shrugged up my shoulders and answered, "I think, some family dispute." To put an end to it, and drown Saint Alu's voice, who was still outrageous, I opened the door, and cried out, as if nothing had happened, "The actors are come, we need only light away." I was in hopes Saint Alu might come to himself, be appeased, and the storm pass.

The company entered the room: it was very lucky there were no lights, which would have discovered a terrible scene. Madame De Saint Alu cried bitterly; the husband had tears in his eyes; to me all this was discernible by the light of the fire.

Saint Alu, under pretence of ordering the candles to be lighted, left the room: when he returned, as he

passed

passed by, he bid me, in very harsh terms, to be gone, and never come into his sight any more. It happened unfortunately that an officer, next me, overheard him; this put me under the fatal necessity of not complying, as otherwise I naturally should have done: nevertheless, as my sword was in another room, and I did not think proper to run any hazard from Saint Alu's obstinacy, I went and fetched it. His lady, seeing me return, shewed me, by a glance of her eye, how much she was concerned at my presence: but unfortunately, as I said before, her husband's threats were overheard; and in a garrisoned town, where points of honour are so much regarded, I could not think of giving the least handle to people's discourse, especially in an affair wherein I was not allowed to justify myself. I remained therefore, and had the eyes of the whole assembly upon me. This made me suffer cruelly. To put an end to such a troublesome scrutiny, I proposed a dupe to the company, and sat down to play.

After staying a sufficient time, to shew I was not intimidated by Saint Alu's menaces, I left the house. Whilst I staid, the husband, much to be pitied, gave evident proofs of the anguish he was under, sometimes calling for his sword, sometimes his hat; in fine, every action betrayed what passed interiorly. It grieved me exceedingly, and I was in the utmost despair, for having been the occasion of what had happened.

The next day I was exceedingly surprized to hear, that the lady, pressed by her husband, who pretended to have seen strange things, and on this terrible evidence threatened to kill her, if she did not frankly own all that had passed, giving his word to forget all that had happened, if she shewed such an entire confidence in him: the lady, I say, thought she had done wonders in owning, that I would have taken off her garters for a particular use (she made me say) that would bring her good luck. As I often amused myself with cabalistical operations and performing tricks, which, though natural in themselves, surprize such as are unacquainted with them, this amiable lady laid hold on the pretext to excuse herself, in hopes her

husband, who knew me, would give credit to it. Saint Alu took this occasion to have convincing proofs of the truth. His lady is truly pious, and he obliged her that morning to approach the sacraments, and then swear upon her damnation, that nothing more had passed. She complied; and he agreed to live with her, provided she promised never to see me more.

'This, dear Jenny,' continued the marquis, 'is the real truth of the adventure, without the least disguise. Far from blaming Saint Alu's conduct, and justifying myself by ridiculing him, I really pitied him sincerely, and always did him justice. I never omitted any opportunity of mentioning those good qualities my friendship formerly remarked in him. His behaviour in my regard has been very different, every where railing against me. I never repented it; and whatever he may do to force me to change my conduct, I shall always be the same, and ever avoid doing him the least prejudice. This is the life I have lead during my stay at Pont à Mousson. Reading and hunting took up my leisure hours: but, whatever my amusements were, you were always present to my imagination.'

My lover related this adventure with so much candour, that I no longer suspected his fidelity. After this, our discourse turned upon the situation of my affairs. I could not forbear hinting the uneasiness I felt at being a burden to Saint Fall; adding withal, that I could not prevail with myself to live any longer at his, or any other person's expence; that I was come to a resolution, which was, notwithstanding my little relish for a convent, to take shelter in one, as a place of security against temptations; that I could not depend on my own strength, as the world had it's charms; and that I ran too great a hazard in such a situation.

The marquis heard me without interruption; he seemed thoughtful. I continued to represent to him very earnestly the dangers to which I was exposed; and to convince him I did not complain without reason, I fairly related the visit intended me by the duke, the remarks La Geneval had made on it, and her behaviour to me the day before.

My

My lover seemed sensible that I was in the right, particularly as to the dangers I mentioned in so lively a manner. He replied, that he would take till the next day to consider on what I had alledged, and that he did not despair of finding some expedient between the two extremes, which I should approve of; protesting, that he was too nearly concerned in every thing which regarded my reputation, not to concur with me in proper measures. After some discourse on this subject he retired, assuring me that he would immediately think of some method to make me easy, till he had the happiness of shewing, that he esteemed nothing in this world equal to me.

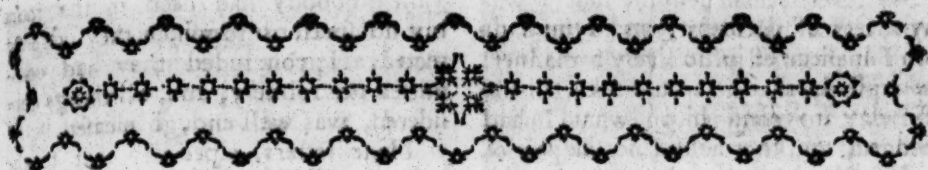
These last marks of my lover's tenderness afforded me much comfort. My hopes began to tower; and notwithstanding the many obstacles that might discourage me from expecting a husband of the marquis's quality, still I flattered myself with the bewitching chimera. Every thing appears possible, when eagerly desired. After several reflections on this head, I bethought myself of the letters I had wrote to the marquis and Saint Fal. I had a curiosity to read them again, but they were not to be found. At first I was uneasy, and looked earnestly for them, though in

vain: nobody had been in the room but the persons to whom they were directed. I concluded they had committed the robbery; and, all things considered, was well enough pleased.

These letters, especially that to the marquis, displayed my aversion to my present situation, and a disrelish for all assistance from others. I imagined this might induce the marquis to provide for me, without my seeming to ask it. A thousand passing fancies made me long to depend on him alone; I thought that would screen me from my own scrupulosity. He had promised to marry me, which I judged sufficient for my justification. This was a great step for me, whose tender conscience was often alarmed at trifles.

The next day I received a letter from the marquis, acquainting me, that he could not see me these two days; being obliged to wait on his father to Paris, who had business of consequence that required dispatch. He added, he had some affairs of his own, which he would willingly end before he saw me. He asked it as a favour, that I would not be impatient, hoping that his return would effect an agreeable change in my affairs, and assuring me I should have no room to repent the confidence I had placed in him.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



THE

FORTUNATE COUNTRY MAID.

VOLUME THE SECOND.



Resolved to shut myself up during the absence of my dear lover, and see nobody; but Madame De Geneval, whom her husband undoubtedly had made sensible of the injustice of her behaviour, came to see me, and made several excuses for what had passed, by imputing to my chamber-maid, who was, she said, very foul-mouthed, the cause of the unmannerly expressions she had employed. How much soever I might be provoked against her, she seemed so humble and sincere, that I could not help returning a civil answer to what she said on this occasion. I am not ill-natured, but of a forgiving temper; besides, I thought it was to no purpose to shun her for the little time I had to stay at her house.

Madame De Geneval went from one extreme to another: we were no sooner reconciled, but she invited herself to sup with me, the better to ratify her pardon, as she said. I was not yet mistress of that faculty which teaches us politely to get rid of troublesome people; I durst not refuse her. The husband coming in, was of the party; and as M. De Saint Fal arrived the instant we were sitting down to table, I obliged him to make one. Monsieur De Geneval entertained us, as usual, with a thousand stories; gave us several adventures that were not new, yet amusing, by the new turn he gave them. His wife proposed to go the next day to the Park with me, assuring me the king would be there, and that he intended to fish in the canal. As little disposed as I was, I could not resist this party, for the following rea-

son: one of Geneval's friends, belonging to the board of works, had promised him a gondola for his wife, and I could not have had a finer occasion of taking the air agreeably.

The pleasure I felt the next day in this party made me forget my cares, and I was not sorry I had consented to it. Saint Fal was with us, and shewed us the Menagerie, Marly, and Meudon. I admired these palaces, which increased my eagerness to see that of Versailles the first opportunity.

After having run over some other parts of the Park, waiting for the king, who came pretty late, we amused ourselves with seeing him fishing. Madame De Geneval remarked to me a very handsome man, who had his eyes continually upon us, and who, she told me, was the very duke who the day of my arrival had desired to see me. The fear I was under lest he should make an attempt to speak to me, obliged me to return home, where we sat directly down to table.

We lost no time; the fresh air had given us so keen an appetite, that we all played our parts with a good grace. The discourse rolled upon the places we had seen, which occasioned from time to time some curious anecdotes, which pleased me much. I found a satisfaction in every thing relating to the court, without guessing the reason: my mind seemed to forebode, that the day would come when I should have a place there.

In the mean time, the night being advanced, Geneval and his wife retired. The count seemed to have a great mind to talk to me; but he thought proper to take another opportunity, knowing
my

my nicety of decorum; and I must do him this piece of justice, never was lover more assiduous, or more careful not to offend. I wished him a good night with all the cheerfulness in the world, with which he seemed so satisfied, that I dare say he slept well upon it. Lovers are very foolish; the least thing dejects, and a mere nothing raises them again.

The next day, destined for great events, I rose extremely gay, with a certain unconcern which was not customary. How easily we become acquainted with a life of pleasure! Like a great many women, my looking-glass did not a little contribute to my good-humour, and in those days it flattered me very much. A millener who had been sent for, set me off in that taste and air, that is to be caught no where but at Paris or the court. I had a mind to be fine that day, and I do not know why, for I had no design to please. A pair of stays, brought home the night before, gave so easy and so fine a turn to my shape, that I was quite charmed with them. My cloaths put on, nothing was wanting to compleat my dress.

As soon as the ceremonies of my toilette were over, I passed into my great room. I own my weakness: I thought myself very well; and I said in my own little conceit, it would be no misfortune to the marquis to have a wife of my air. In short, I found myself handsome, and I have seldom seen any who surpassed me. Let this vanity be forgiven me; it is the plain truth: I have still some fine remains.

Just as I had finished my dress, Monsieur and Madame De Geneval came to my apartment. The husband extolled my charms highly; compliments of form. As for the wife, she blamed the make of my gown, arraigned my tire-woman, found fault with my shoes and stockings. True woman; but I forgave her, in consideration of the proposal she made of going to see the king at mass. I accepted of it the more readily, because I knew both the old marquis and his son were at Paris, and I was in no fear of being discovered.

Geneval having told us it was time to go, we went to the castle; as it was but a step, there was no occasion for chairs. We passed by the comptroller of the household's apartment, and so directly through the little galleries leading into the castle. We met few people, to

my no small disappointment. A woman is always a woman; and, provided she is *pretty*, likes to be seen and admired: the last word, I believe, is the whole truth.

I expressed my surprize to M. Geneval. 'Oh, we are not yet come to the court!' said he to me, smiling; 'these are but the passages that lead to it.' In reality, as soon as we were got to the prince's gallery, and began to enter into the apartments, I was in such a consternation, especially when I came into the great gallery, that I forgot myself, and stood still at every step: fresh matter of admiration. If it had not been for Monsieur De Geneval, who was my guide, and prevented my distraction, I should have run among the busiest of those with whom the apartments generally swarm.

In the mean time, at every step a crowd of people stopped and whispered to one another. I began to recover a little from my enthusiasm, and to consider those who passed by. I could not refrain from blushing, so stared at as I was. Certainly, I think, there is no nation in the world where they examine the women so nicely. I was every minute stepping on one side or another, fearing lest they should speak to me, not to say any thing else; for they came so very near, it was excusable in me to have that thought. Madame De Geneval, who perceived the confusion I was in, as well as what occasioned it, laughed very heartily: and but for her husband, who told her she was not now at home, I believe she would have entered upon a discourse pleasant enough, and sufficiently overheard, to draw after us the young fellows, of whom the gallery was full. But my turn soon came; and, if I had been spiteful, I might have justly diverted myself at her expence.

As we were walking, which Madame De Geneval did with an air of familiarity, and as if she had been a person well known, the closet-door opened on a sudden; the king was going to mass, every body followed, and in an instant the crowd disappeared. Monsieur De Geneval told his wife, she had done ill not to secure places, and that it was very likely we should not get into the chapel. His wife bantered him for his uneasiness, and told him, she was sure they would open her the door as soon as she appeared. The husband shook his head at this

this idle piece of pride, he foresaw part of what was to happen.

Madame De Geneval being, as she said, very well known at court, and acquainted with its ways, scratched at the chapel-door. A centinel opened it a little way. 'You cannot come in, Madam,' said he; 'there is no room.' She mentioned her name, and was insisting upon her prerogative; but the guard shut to the door without answering her, as if he thought her a person of no great consequence. Transported with rage, she told me, that this was some young recruit, who did not know his duty, but that she would teach it him. For my part, I could not help smiling: she perceived it, and her vanity making her believe it was occasioned by the little notice taken of her, she returned to the charge, and scratched once again at the door. 'Why, Madam, it is to no purpose,' cried the guard; 'I have already told you, you cannot come in.' With these words he was going to shut the door, when I advanced. I will not say my countenance pleased him; I would not indulge my vanity so far: perhaps I resembled some lady of quality, or that my dress imposed on him. Be that as it will, opening the door to me, he stretched out his hand, and said to Geneval, 'Pray, Madam, make room.' Upon this I advanced again, and he let me in. The poor woman was obliged, in order to follow me, to say she was of my company. It seemed as if that day was destined to mortify her; there was but one place left upon the forms, which was given me, Madame De Geneval standing all the while. I pitied her, and offered my place; but she refused, telling me, with a disdain she could not hide, that people used no ceremony in the king's presence.

I was too much taken up with the charming sight to mind what she said. If a person out of the country is amazed the first time she finds herself at court, let any one imagine my astonishment. I, who at most had heard talk of it, without ever having had any grounds to form ideas of that kind.

Of all the brilliant objects that struck my sight, I fixed my eyes on nothing during part of the service but the tribune, where the king distinguished himself as much by his devotion, as by an air of greatness inseparable from him. I forgot nothing that could confirm me

in my prejudice, by which I was so zealously attached to him. I plainly saw that the monarch was alone, and that this loneliness was the privilege of his rank. The crowd of lords behind him had an effect which struck me: I looked on it as a shade, which placed in the most advantageous light this amiable prince, with whom I was so much taken ever since the lucky moment when chance had brought him in my sight.

After having for a long time considered this attracting point of view, I let my eyes wander through the galleries. This sight shewed me the injustice of the remark I had often heard made, concerning the little piety which reigns amongst those of the great world: on the contrary, I was edified at the decency with which the courtiers assisted at the mysteries; each person seemed recollected within himself; no discourse, no trifling; their outward behaviour inculcated modesty and respect. I thought I was the only distracted person, and I blushed to see it. I have since learned from experience, that what I then looked upon as solid piety, was but an imitation of the master. It is all copy at court: when the model is good, all around it bears his resemblance.

Mass being over, I was taken up with so many curious objects, that I should have remained the last in the place, so deeply was I engaged; but a hand which I felt, and which I thought was Madame De Geneval's, reminded me to go, and brought me to myself; in this notion I answered her without turning about. My eyes were fixed upon a lady, whose countenance had pleased me to that degree, I could not take them off. She was tall, exquisitely well shaped, had large black eyes, and a singularity in her face that struck me. I was examining her person with an eager eye, when Madame De Geneval interrupted me in a tone of voice which retained a great deal of her former humour. 'Pray, Madam, answer the 'marquis.' At this name I turned suddenly about, thinking it to be my lover; for I knew nobody called by that name except himself. But how was I struck! who would have expected such an incident! I trembled every joint at the sight of the old Marquis De L. V. father of him who possessed my whole thoughts. He did not go, as he had told the son; it was only an artifice: the

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Sequel

sequel will shew why it was employed. But, to return.

'Pardon me, Madam,' says this old nobleman, 'if I take the lucky opportunity that favours me with a sight of you. Features like yours are not easily forgot; give me leave to express my joy at having once more found you. The circumstances in which I left you gave me great uneasiness; and, but for the duty of my place, which called me away, I should assuredly have staid till you had recovered your health; but if they executed my orders, they must have told you, that I commanded all imaginable care to be taken of you. But what is the meaning of this, Madam?' continued the nobleman, perceiving by my countenance that I was in pain; 'is my presence always to occasion trouble and uneasiness? Is it possible that I should be so unfortunate! Have you any private reasons——' 'The lady can have none, Sir,' said Geneval, who could no longer hold her tongue. 'Any one would think it an honour to be taken notice of by so polite a nobleman as the marquis is.'—'I am very much obliged to you, Madam,' replied he, looking earnestly at her, as if he endeavoured to call her to mind; 'I wish this lady was of the same opinion.' A man somewhat in years, and who seemed to be a person of distinction, came luckily to speak to the marquis, which gave me time to recover. I blushed at my own simple behaviour, and this reflection stung me to that degree, that I believe I should have come off with flying colours, if the attack had been renewed; but undoubtedly the courtier, who interrupted so opportunely this perplexing conversation, was of a rank to put even persons of quality under constraint as soon as he appeared. I was not mistaken: going out of the chapel, Madame De Geneval told me, that the person in question was in favour, and it was every body's business to keep well with him.

Surprise frequently hides part of the danger, but reflection afterwards magnifies it. I had no sooner left my lover's father, but my blood was chilled at the thoughts of my narrow escape; a thousand things came into my mind, and occasioned such a consternation, that I neither heard nor saw any thing. In-

stead of going down the stairs, as I ought to have done, my hurry of thought carried me back to the apartments. La Geneval, ignorant of my design, followed me, and perceiving that I made no answer to what she said, thought I resented the haughty manner in which she had spoke to me: she judged proper to make some atonement, by abating of her proud disposition. This same pride of her's proved advantageous to me, inasmuch as experience let her see, from time to time, that persons of the first quality shewed me respect. She was persuaded, I must be much above the ordinary sort. Be that as it will, she joined me, and stopping me with great politeness, asked if I was angry with her, and if her company was disagreeable; adding, that she had reason to believe so, by my hurrying so fast from her, which was taken notice of, and looked as if she was troublesome. These words drew me from my reverie. I assured her I was quite of a different opinion from what she seemed to apprehend; that she did not do me justice, having reasons for quitting the castle, and going home. She replied, I did not take the way, and was going quite wrong. I begged her to lead; and, following her, was vastly surprized to find how far I had to go back before we reached the courts. I was offered blue chairs, which always wait at the foot of the stairs, to carry me home. I was going to throw myself into the first, without farther thought than the dread of being followed, when I hear a voice calling out, 'Run, and beg her to stay a moment!' Madame De Geneval, who heard these words as well as I, instead of going into her chair, stopped mine, saying, that the same nobleman who had accosted me in the chapel was coming down the great stairs, accompanied by one of his pages, and that he asked to speak with me. My fears redoubled. 'O Heavens!' cried I to myself, 'inspire me what to do in this perilous occasion! How comes it I always meet the father, and never the son! His presence now would be very serviceable, to extricate me from this fatal perplexity.' Making this reflection, the old marquis joined me. I remained in the chair: my confusion was so great, that I thought I certainly appeared to him excessively ill-bred. 'I must not suffer you, Madam,' says he,

he, without taking notice of the confusion I was in, 'to make use of this chair: here is mine, that shall carry you home; you will be more at your ease in it; and I must beg leave to pay you my respects after you have dined. I have not forgot the regard you expressed for people of my age, in the conversation I had with you in the country, and I reflect on it with pleasure.' Saying this, he presented me his hand to lead me to his chair. It seemed as if this lord had an ascendant over me, which could not be resisted. However, I answered his compliment, that I was sensible of his civilities, and should be very much honoured by his visit.

The chair went off at these words. As I turned towards the grate, I spied the old marquis talking with Madame De General, which gave me not a little disquiet, as I knew the woman was very talkative. I imagined, as I went through the courts, every one stopped to examine me. I concluded it was on account of the chair I was in, as the arms were known; and, to speak the truth, notwithstanding the many cares with which I was oppressed, self-love was soothed with it's chimæras, and I was not sorry to see myself in so pompous and brilliant an equipage.

My cook-maid, Barbara, (it is the last time of calling her by this name) delivered me a letter as I came in, which I opened in great haste, because I knew the hand. Notwithstanding the late vexatious incident, my affection was not diminished for the person from whom it came. It was from St. Agnes, that unfortunate and tender friend, whose story is related before. She wrote as follows.

I Never doubted, my dear Jenny, of your affection, or generous sentiments; lovely Lindamine gave me proofs thereof the very first day she arrived, by informing me with what zeal you had engaged her to serve me, and the steps that had been already taken for making me easy. I durst not flatter myself with any good success from them: I thought all the world had forgot me. What transports did I not feel, from the convincing proofs that my friend and my lover were true! Yes, dear Jenny, your endeavours and friendship triumph. I have

received an answer from constant Melicourt: he will be here shortly, to convince me his passion is unalterable. I should have wrote to you before, had I known your address; but your letter, which I have just now received, makes me snatch the opportunity given me of acquainting you with the satisfaction I enjoy. I know you share my troubles and pleasure; I will not fail to give you a full account, as soon as Melicourt arrives. As far as he is his own master, he will not fail, on what I shall say to him, to go and inform you what I have to fear or hope. Imagine, dear friend, what I suffer whilst my fate is in suspense! Alas, I blush to own it to you! but, if I am so unhappy as to be forced to finish my days in a cloister, they will soon be at an end. Adieu, dear friend! Shorten, by your endearing letters, the tedious hours, spent in care and impatience. You know but too well, from experience, how horrible uncertainty is, not to alleviate the weight of it's torments. Lindamine, who is now made acquainted with your history, and who loves you sincerely, desires the same favour. She has a great deal of good sense and wit; every body here loves her, and respects her virtue: convincing proofs thereof appeared in resisting the violence of her lover's passion, of which he gave publick marks. As dear as Belizai was to her, she would never see him. You know her history; she has told it me: but you do not know, that this rash lover found out Lindamine's retreat, and that a moment after she was got into the monastery he appeared, and committed numberless extravagancies, in order to oblige his mistress to come out.

The rashness of his passion pleaded his excuse, and he at last thought fit to retire. The charming pilgrim could not help being moved at it, but by her admirable vocation she has surmounted this natural weakness. How happy she is! Why cannot I follow her example! Once more, adieu, dear friend! I expect to hear from you with an impatience great as my affection. That is saying a great deal, for it is beyond every thing I can express.

SAINT AGNES.

I had scarce read the letter, when Geneval came in. 'You never told me, Madam,' said she, looking very cunning, 'that you know the Marquis De L. V. I will make no secret to you, that he was an admirer of mine before I was engaged. Though advanced in years, he was still dangerous; and my mother kept me from him with as much caution as if he had been a young man. He has been just now putting me in mind of this, and he seemed to recollect these trifles with some pleasure; but for all that, I was not so blind as not to discern, his asking me leave to renew his acquaintance is only a pretence to gain yours.'—'You banter, sure, Madam,' replied I in great confusion; 'I do not know the person you speak of.'—'Not know him!' cried Madame De Geneval, fixing her eyes on me. 'What means this mystery? Did not he once meet you as he passed through a village?'—'That is true,' continued I, perceiving easily by her discourse that he had told her this particular; 'but he might have acquainted you,' continued I, 'that I had the honour to see him but for a moment.'—'Aye,' said she, 'I know you fainted, and he went away without knowing who you was, in spite of all his enquiries; and that same curiosity not being then satisfied, is what has occasioned the discourse we had together. As I could answer his questions but very imperfectly, I contented myself by assuring him, that as soon as he should signify his desires to you on that subject, he would be fully satisfied.'

Dinner, which was then serving up, interrupted a conversation that was very troublesome to me. Geneval, who had company to dine with her, would engage me to assist in doing the honours of the table; but I excused myself, under pretence of a pain in my stomach, which was true enough. I was so overwhelmed with the rencontre I had had, and it caused such disagreeable reflections, and those of such consequence, that I was more than an hour dreaming over my meat before I could eat a mouthful. My good aunt, who stood behind my chair, and who pressed me ever since I sat down to employ the time as I ought, astonished to see me so distressed, asked me with all the respect

she was capable of, if I could live without eating. To get rid of her importunity, and in order to be left alone, I complied, and forced myself to eat; after which I retired to my closet, where calling to mind the fatal meeting with the old marquis, and all the consequences that might ensue, I gave myself up to sorrow and tears; but struggling with myself, and expecting the marquis would soon be with me, and that if he surprized me in this condition, he would have room for many reflections; fearing, on the other hand, that his son was not yet gone, and lest he should come upon us whilst his father was with me, which would discover all; I judged it prudent to prevent all these incidents. For this purpose, I thought myself obliged to write to my lover, and apprise him of all that had happened to me; beseeching him, in the name of all that was dear, to take me away, and not expose me to the danger of losing him perhaps for ever.

As soon as my letter was finished, I fell into a new perplexity how to get it delivered. Who could I trust? I had no choice but my simple aunt: she was of that sort of character which discovers itself at once; she had wit, in her way, but her ingenuity was what I feared. These sort of people, by endeavouring to say nothing, say all. She might be questioned, and loved to prate: to recommend secrecy to her, was giving her an inclination to speak. After having weighed and examined this design, I thought I could not do better than be my own messenger.

This being determined, I ordered a chair: by this means I avoided a great deal of perplexity. I was ignorant where my lover lived; but he was universally known, and I did not question but my chairmen could find his lodging: I intended to make one of them deliver my letter, and to keep close all the while in my chair. Another reason engaged me to go from home: I was willing to avoid the marquis's visit, and gain time, till I had given notice to his son; who, perhaps sensible of my danger, might find means to secure me from what I feared with so much reason.

I am persuaded there is nobody but enters at once into all these things, and imagines

imagines that during this quarter of an hour I was not very happy. Let us go on.

The chairmen knew, as I imagined, where the marquis lived. As soon as I came to the door, I made them stop, and ordered him who seemed the most intelligent of the two, to ask if he was at home. I was in such an agitation, that I forgot the most important precaution. The man appeared again very soon, and told me, that the person I asked for was at table, that they were gone to acquaint him, that I should have an answer in a moment. I had no intention to speak with him in so suspected a place, where we could be so overlooked: a number of footmen were passing backwards and forwards, and might draw conjectures from this visit. I thought it was sufficient to send in my letter, and I was going to give it to the porter, with orders to deliver it into the hands of my lover, when Dubois, the valet de chambre I mentioned in another place, appeared. My dress was undoubtedly the reason he did not know me again. He drew near, and told me that the marquis, hearing a lady asked to speak to him, desired me to go into his closet, and that he would immediately wait on me. 'I cannot,' replied I, charmed with being so happy to meet this man; 'but, dear Dubois,' said I, 'give him this letter, and tell him——' 'Ah, Miss Jenny!' said he, knowing me again, 'what's your design? To what do you expose yourself! Have you a mind to be ruined? My master is at Paris, and if it be him you want, as I doubt not but it is, they have made a mistake. His father is here: all is discovered if you appear.'—'Heavens!' cried I, 'what do you tell me? Surely, I never designed my letter for him.'—'Fly, then!' said Dubois; 'our old master will be here presently; he is too much an humble servant of the ladies to make them wait. They told him you was handsome, and I tremble lest he comes before your chairman, who is missing, be found.'

Let people judge of the consternation into which these words threw me. I bid the chairman, that remained with me, open the door, chusing rather to return on foot, than risk such an interview. But the obstinacy of this fellow in searching after his partner, was the cause why I had it not in my power to retire when he was come.

A page, who had been eying me from the fore-parlour, and seen me speak to Dubois, and who saw the letter I had just delivered, regaled his master with the discoveries he had made: the company was then bantering him upon his good fortune. The stupidity of the man that carried my message, who thought he had done finely in adding that I came to solicit his interest, occasioned their raillery: this wicked page, I say, (I hope he will forgive me the epithet) came slyly, and informed the old marquis, that, tired with waiting, I was just going away, and but for one of the chairmen that was missing I had been gone before. One of the lords at table with him cried out, 'Ah! this is too cruel.' After which he ran out, and was followed by seven or eight other young persons, who came just as they were taking me away. One of them, whom I knew to be the Duke of —, him that Geneval made me take notice of, at the canal, bid them set me down, and coming to my chair, told me, I was going to have an audience of the marquis, and that in his name he asked a thousand pardons for making me wait. Pierced to the heart at this accident, I made signs to go on, without returning any answer, but in vain: the respect the men had for the noblemen that surrounded me, made them set down the chair and open the door. The young nobleman who spoke to me presented his hand; but he no sooner saw my face, than turning to the rest: 'The marquis is no unlucky man,' cried he; 'this pretty lady is the same we all admired at her window on our return from hunting.' At this they all drew near, and examined me with a murmur that flattered my charms, but redoubled my uneasiness. To increase my confusion, up comes the old marquis; who, knowing me again, retired two steps with an air of joy. 'Ah! is it you Madam?' cried he, 'Good God! why have you done me the honour to prevent me? I am very angry at myself, not to have hastened a visit I was bound to make.' As he spoke these words, he took me out of my chair very politely, and I followed him with a trouble that may be well imagined.

I was accompanied by all those who were with the marquis; and I heard one among them say to the nobleman that spoke

spoke to me first, 'This is the person, I will engage, of whom you talked so much, and at whose house you were refused admittance: you had reason to extol her beauty.' This discourse confirmed me in what Geneval had said the night before, and taught me at the same time how much one may depend on the discretion of young people.

Crossing the anti-chamber, I spied Dubois, who placed himself in my way, and dexterously put his finger on his mouth, as much as to say, be cautious, and confess nothing. I understood extremely well what he meant by this, and methought it inspired me with prudence. As soon as I was set down, addressing myself to the old marquis, and affecting an air of the greatest sincerity; 'If I had known sooner, my lord,' said I, 'who you were, I should not have omitted coming to thank you for the regard you shewed me when we met by chance in the village. Madame De Geneval informed me this morning of these particulars, and that you had carried your goodness so far, as to have designed sending a physician to my assistance.'—'It is true, Madam,' replied the marquis; 'but can one do too much for one so accomplished?—I make you judges, gentlemen,' said he speaking to the company, 'can one regret any pains so well employed?' The noblemen all said the politest things imaginable on this occasion, and I thought I did not return them very ill. The Duke of — asked me very earnestly, if he might be so happy as to be serviceable to me at court. I framed my answer upon the story invented by Saint Fal, and said, I did not doubt but I should want advocates in the affair, which brought me thither: that my deceased husband had done good service, and spent his fortune in it; that I asked, as a consideration for all this, a pension to maintain me in a convent, where I was resolved to end my days. At the word convent, the old marquis and the whole company exclaimed: they said one and all, that they sincerely offered me their interest for the success of my suit; but, on condition the last article should not be mentioned in my petition but for form sake; adding all that young people could say on such an occasion, to a woman that is not frightful. I came off pretty well in this con-

versation, and was lucky enough not to be examined about the regiment in which my pretended husband had served; this would have gruelled me, had it happened, as it might naturally enough. Saint Fal had not instructed me on that head: it was very excusable in him, and we had neither of us much reason to foresee our ever being in such perplexing circumstances.

I was got up to take leave of the old marquis, who had eyed me during the whole time of my visit, when he came to me, and desired me to stay a moment longer. 'May I, Madam, propose a little diversion to you,' said he. 'There is a play to-night, you have not perhaps seen; a piece much in vogue, called Iphigenia. I am sure it will amuse you: the character is tender and well wrought: it pleases all the world, and I make no doubt but it will have the same effect with you.' I thought I had a good excuse, by my being then in the state of widowhood: but people in the great world are very apt to suspect excuses of that sort. 'Oh! as to that, Madam,' says the young duke, 'that pretence will not pass; besides, the time allotted for mourning is out. It is presumed you are not known; and even suppose you were, we live in a court, it is not amiss to appear there, and let it be known how deserving you are.'—'That is a very proper reason,' added a young person who had not yet spoke; 'and I take upon me to acquaint the world, that a widow so distinguished ought not to be refused: I declare myself from this moment the solicitor of her pension.'—'You see, Madam,' said the marquis smiling, 'this allows of no reply. I do not in the least doubt but the duke, knowing him as I do, will keep his promise. Do not hesitate to charge him with your affair; he is exceeding lucky in every thing he undertakes.'

The Duke of —, flattered by this discourse, in order to give me a compleat opinion of his interest, loudly protested, that if in three days my pension was not granted, if I would be directed by him, he would submit to any thing that should be imposed on him, and never more appear in my sight; a punishment, in his opinion, beyond all torments.

The serious manner in which this was spoke, made the whole company laugh-
for

For my part, fearing lest a longer scene might clear up who it was, I rose a second time to go; representing for a pretence, that it would be indecent for me to appear alone at the theatre, or conducted thither by a man. 'I foresaw this objection,' replied the old marquis, replacing me with great respect in my chair: 'you saw me give orders; I have sent for the lady you live with; I have sent my chair for her, and I doubt not but she will be here presently. I know her, and am sure she will be overjoyed at the honour of accompanying you. But, in case she fails us, I will give you an agreeable companion; and thus, Madam,' continued the marquis, 'all difficulties are removed, and every thing conspires towards your seeing Iphigenia.'

What could one answer to such pressing and polite solicitations! Courtiers are not easily refused, particularly by women. I recommended myself to God, and his divine protection: I had no other party to take; it is generally our last resource, though it ought to be the first, as the most solid and assured.

'This being resolved,' cried the marquis, 'the question is, who must introduce these ladies to the play? For my part,' continued he, 'besides that I am too old, and should acquit myself very ill of the employment, my being in waiting prevents me.' All that were present offered themselves; but the Duke of — was the privileged man, on account of his quality without doubt. The marquis added, that he would provide us with places, and would send to the exempt on guard. He said, with a smile, that he would employ Dubois as a worthy agent of his son's, and very intelligent in the service of the ladies. Had the marquis turned his eyes towards me at that time, he would have discovered I was affected with what he said; but, happily, he did not then examine me. As for the noblemen that surrounded me, they, doubtless, attributed to my bashfulness the disorder that appeared in my face; their flattery was sufficient to make it probable, and the little confusion, of which they imagined themselves the authors, did not make against me. I have since learned, that a new beauty was not thought odious in those parts. But enough of that. A woman may be pardoned for knowing a great many things, but she is

not allowed to expatiate upon them. Disguise is so much the fashion, people are scandalized the minute we lay it aside.

Dubois, who had been called, appeared with an air that betrayed his surprise, apprehending a severe reprimand; but he recovered at the orders he received: he hearkened to the marquis with a share of astonishment, and made him repeat the message twice over, he was so frightened. Notwithstanding the agitation I was in, I could not help smiling to myself at his perplexity. The arrival of Madame De Geneval, in whose looks I could read a secret joy, helped to keep me in countenance; for although I was flattered with being made for the world, I was not in my proper element. The comfort I had for my want of experience was, that my friend seemed more at a loss than I; for a woman who piqued herself on knowing the court, I did not find her behaviour suitable to the company she was in. That volubility of speech I had observed in her, made me think at first that she alone would be a match for the whole company; but I have found from experience, that many of those who appear to have the most wit among people of their own sphere, are the most puzzled when among their betters. Madame De Geneval continually lost the thread of her discourse: she *lordship'd* every one who did her the honour to address themselves to her; like a tennis-ball on a racket, in the easy-chair placed for her, she was no sooner sat down in it, but at each word spoke to her she bounded up, and a curtsy ensued. I could not forbear smiling several times at this excessive good-breeding; but I thought I should have laughed out, when one of the company expressed some gallantry on the subject of her beauty. This flattery softened her looks into a studied smile of sweetness, designed to convince how very sensible she was of the favour; and her body, as if it had been upon springs at the same instant, by a motion that kept time with her head and shoulders, put her neck on the rack to hold itself higher.

This is a small sketch of what self-love can do, and at the same time a sample of our charity. We women shew each other no mercy; and, to conclude this article with a proof of my sincerity, I must own, nothing in these Memoirs has

has given me so much pleasure as this little piece of satire. Where is the harm in confessing the truth? I wish others may not be guilty of the same fault. Upon reflection, I was inclined to suppress this passage: but then my motive was pride; so that, all considered, I leave things as they are.

In the mean time, the attention with which the old marquis examined me, renewed my former frights, and made me judge he was contriving something that regarded me. This brought to my mind what he had said as he went out of my chamber, when I feigned to continue in my fainting fit, which I before mentioned, that he had means of discovering who I was. But what chiefly terrified me, was his remaining silent as to what had then passed; and when I compared his politeness with his reservedness, after taking so much pains to find me out, I could not help concluding, from his seeming tranquillity, that he acted the politician, and had secret motives for his behaviour.

Prepossessed with these reflections, I repented my facility in accepting of the party of pleasure proposed. Was it not possible that a hundred inconveniences might ensue? I apprehended them. My lover might come: what would have been the consequence! Would not our mutual confusion have betrayed me, or given room for former suspicions? A crowd of such like apprehensions seized my mind at once; I grew pale, and the Duke of —, who was near, and missed no opportunity of saying soft things to me, was not the last in perceiving it. ‘You change colour, Madam,’ said he; ‘are you out of order? You seem to be fainting?’ I excused myself in the best manner I could; and I attributed the alteration he observed to a new pair of stays. The old marquis, who heard my answer, which was natural enough to gain credit, came to me, and in an obliging manner begged me to think myself at home, and thereupon called for a cordial; which, he assured me, was exquisite for comforting the heart.

Geneval, who judged she ought to share in the assistance given me, offered to unlace me: all the young sparks applauded this motion, and drew about me with eyes that betrayed their motive. I refused to suffer it, with a blush, which at the same time made me appear to be better, although it was in reality

the effects of common modesty; but my resolution determined it, and they desisted. So true it is, that men are no farther enterprizing than they are encouraged.

The cordial being come, the old marquis presented it himself: I thought proper to take some out of policy. In effect, it recovered me, and I found myself perfectly well, as usual. But are all the cordials in the world capable of curing an unquiet mind?

Dubois, who had been to bespeak places from the marquis, returned, and gave an account of his commission. He brought word that the exempt ordered two to be kept for us; but that he desired us at the same time to come early, on account of the number of people he was to provide with places. Upon this, the marquis presented me his hand, and led me to his chair; the Duke of — walked on one side of me, and Madame De Geneval, to whom a count gave his hand, followed. We went very slow. The old marquis said to me softly, ‘You will make many conquests, Madam, I am sure; but however flattering they may be, you triumph over a heart, which places your charms in the strongest light.’ — ‘I expected, my lord,’ replied I, ‘these compliments, not because I merit them, but as they naturally come from a person of your turn; with this disposition, I hear them without the least vanity on my side.’ — ‘Would to God,’ said the marquis, with a look far from suitable to his years, ‘that all the vows addressed to you make no greater impression! but, with so many charms, it is not possible but you must have a compassionate heart. It is a point I beg leave to discuss with you after the play. I have a great deal to say to you upon the subject, and must own you make me uneasy on more accounts than one.’

The discourse broke off there, and I was not a little perplexed. We were at the door of his apartment, which put an end to it. I got into the chair that was designed for me: it was the young marquis’s, as I soon learned; and as it was the finest, they assigned it to me. Madame De Geneval went into that of the father, which was ornamented in a manner agreeable to his age. She seemed so transported with the honours shown her, which she undoubtedly thought due

to her merit, that she could neither see nor hear, nor was sensible of any thing but her own dear self. Whilst we are in the arms of self-love, we have very little regard for any thing else.

We were scarce got out of sight, but Dubois approached my chair. 'In the name of God!' said I to him, as soon as I saw him, 'tell me where your master is, and how I may extricate myself from all the difficulties I see round me?'—'Faith, Mademoiselle,' replied he, 'I know not what to say to it: I am so astonished, that I cannot imagine how these things could happen, or why you should throw yourself in to the toils of our crafty master.' Here I interrupted Dubois, and told him by what accident it came to pass. He heard my story out, and agreed, that after meeting with the old marquis at mass, my behaviour was natural enough, and that neither himself nor I could prevent accidents. Upon this, he told me, that both my lover and Saint Fal were at Paris; that it was impossible for the former to acquaint me that his father did not come there, he not having changed his resolution till a moment before his son's departure; and that Forfan, his gentleman, a person entirely attached to the father, accompanied him in the journey; and that he durst attempt nothing, neither to write to me, nor any other step, fearing he should be examined, which would infallibly have happened.

Dubois and I both concluded, from all these precautions, that the old marquis knew me better than I thought for, or at least had a suspicion of me, and that the journey was one of his stratagems to clear up the mystery. 'But, good God!' cried I, fearing what might happen, 'dear Dubois, what method can I take? Could you not, when I come from the play, get me a post-chaise to make my escape?'—'By no means,' replied this trusty servant; 'you may easily think, that if our conjectures are well-grounded, as there is no room to doubt, there are persons who watch you. Heaven keep us from any attempt of that sort! I have thought of a contrivance which will have a much better effect.' The minute he was going to tell it me, we found ourselves at the playhouse door; a number of chairs and a great crowd interrupted our conversation. Dubois quitted me,

saying, 'Be easy, and cautious of what you say to the old marquis; dissemble, and do not trouble yourself about the rest. I am going to Paris.' He added something more as he retired; but the Duke of —, who was got into the playhouse by the stage-door, and was ready to receive me, hindered my hearing it: a cruel disappointment. My lover was in question, and that is generally a very interesting article.

I had no room to doubt, some moments after I was placed, but that the young duke was the person who at the first sight had been so complaisant as to be dazzled with my youthful charms. He told me as much, as likewise the visit he had made me, and renewed his acquaintance with Madame De Geneval, to whom he was very courteous, secretly aiming, no doubt, to get her of his side, in order to have access to me, or to oblige me, believing her more agreeable to me than she really was.

Whilst he was making his court, my eyes ran over the objects that surrounded me. The prospect was enchanting, and the impression it made was so great, that it took up my mind, and banished all my cares. Such is the way of thinking with us women; new objects seize, engage, and make us vary: the most solid and faithful of us all, is the who returns ofteneft to the favourite object.

This sight humbled my vanity. Till that time I looked on myself as the compleatest and prettiest woman in the world; I could not help flattering myself that I had but few equals: however, I recovered with a sigh from these two errors. The first thing that struck me, as I cast my eyes towards the boxes, was the magnificence and taste which shined there. I then turned my eyes on myself, in order to draw a parallel betwixt those ladies and me. What disparity! Besides my beauty, I thought I had a natural air, but I discovered a stiffness in myself. There, if art supplied the place of beauty, their easy behaviour gave it such charms, that I did not know myself. Though I disapproved of the red with which their faces were vermilioned, I secretly owned it was of great advantage; and I instantly called to mind my having on a certain time made trial of it myself, and the astonishment it occasioned at my being so different from what I was before. I

judged from thence, that it was no great crime to indulge such harmless satisfactions, and that if one's happiness consists in being satisfied with one's self, it is not surprizing that people give into practices which procure it.

The Duke of —, who had finished his politick conversation with Madam De Geneval, came back to me, and interrupted my reflections by his soft expressions: but seeing me consider very attentively a mighty pretty woman, he asked my sentiments of her. 'I think her very charming,' said I; 'her cheerful countenance pleases me beyond expression.' — 'I am infinitely taken,' replied he, 'with this frank and natural decision; there are few women who do justice to their own sex, particularly when beauty decides in their favour. She we talk of, resembles you in this respect; her turn of mind is excellent, and her history very remarkable. If I thought the king would give me time enough, I would relate it to you; and I am persuaded you would thank me.' Having always had a strong inclination for secret history, my answer was, he would do me a sensible pleasure. He was just beginning, but that instant every body rising up, informed us of the king's coming. The duke being obliged to do like the rest, he said, that if I would favour him so far, he would wait on me to give this account, and hoped to have that honour the next day.

I scarce heard these words. I was taken up with the king's presence to such a degree, that I remained the only one standing, although every body was seated, which made me taken notice of with some smiles: even the name of country gentlewoman reached my ears, and I took my seat with a blush, which punished me more ways than one for the little uneasiness my vanity had caused. As great a pleasure as it is to be new, one hates to shew it by any thing in our behaviour.

I had never seen a play, so that it is easily to be imagined how attentive I was: I even melted into tears, and was more Iphigenia than Iphigenia herself. Whatever bears a resemblance to the sentiments of one's heart, and affects it, causes emotions, and recalls the object of one's affections. I found myself moved, thoughtful, anxious. The

idea of the marquis made deep impressions in those passages, where the lover complained of the rigour of his destiny: methought he deserved a milder lot. In one word, I was taken ill; I could scarce fetch my breath. The duke, more inured, or less attentive, could not help smiling at the sincerity of my sorrow. 'How happy is that lover,' says he to me in another of the acts, 'in those precious tears he causes you to shed; but a thousand times more fortunate will he be, who shall please on a more real occasion.' — 'Good God, my lord!' replied I, ashamed of my tears, which I strove in vain to hide, 'you are very cruel to be diverted with my tenderness: great resolution is requisite to resist the motions of the soul, and you plainly shew thereby your own insensibility.' — 'Ah! what do you say, Madam?' replied he, 'and upon what do you ground that suspicion?' — 'Why, is it not evident?' said I, vexed to have given room for this discourse. 'I am not the only one who seems to be touched at this fine scene: my tears are excusable; but you, my lord, who very far from being moved, seem to have a brave compassion, do not you discover that it is none of your favourite virtue, and that you was born with a hard heart?' — 'Much less than you imagine,' returned the duke; 'witness those fine eyes of yours in my behalf: I can easily confute your reproach, since all that belongs not to you, at present, is indifferent to me. Yes, charming creature, if Iphigenia should be a hundred times more charming and lovely, she could never make any impression on my sentiments. You reign alone without a rival, and I think nothing lovely besides yourself.'

This declaration appeared so lively and open, that I thought proper to be silent. The play enabled me the better to observe this conduct; it engaged me so closely, that I soon forgot what had passed: I interested myself more and more in the distresses of the heroine, and it was over when I expected another act would follow; so deep and tender an effect it had on me.

The Duke of —, who seemed enamoured with my slender charms, would have resumed the discourse. I began to be at a loss in answering him, nor did I well know on what pitch to frame my discourse.

discourse. When one has given one's self out for somebody, and yet, through a sincerity of heart, disdains to assume a haughty air; that face of brass is wanting, which impostors easily attain. If I had really been the Countess Des Roches, I should have known very well how to banter the duke on his being so sweet; but when I reflected upon what I was, by taking upon me, I ran a risk of being one day or other ridiculed for my affectation; I found myself under an incertitude, which laid restraint on my very expressions.

Happily the king's presence occasioned such an awe, that my praises were uttered so low, that they could not be overheard: nevertheless, I should have been obliged, either out of good manners or vanity, to return an answer; but an accident, which I little expected, eased me of my fears. An exempt (whom I knew to be such by his staff) advanced towards the duke, and told him the king commanded him to his box. He immediately rose, and appeared concerned at this ill-timed order; at least his looks signified as much. I turned my eyes towards the king; he seemed to consider me: this threw me into a fresh perplexity.

How weak we women are! How justly do they tax us with self-love! How many conjectures did I draw from this regard! Had I strictly examined myself, I might have discovered a belief that the monarch thought me handsome, and that the message related to me; but this vanity was soon punished. The duke presently returned. It is true, he flattered me with a compliment upon the enquiry the prince made after me; but upon the whole I found I was but the second cause of the king's enquiring who I was: he had seen the duke talking earnestly to me; I was handsome and well dressed, but unknown to him, and he had a mind to know who I was. That is the matter of fact; and, all things considered, I found there were no grounds for my first thoughts. However, I was contented with the reverse of self-love, and not sorry to have been mistaken.

The play was over, and they were going to begin the entertainment, when the old marquis appeared at the box joining to the place where I was. He bowed, and asked me if I had been diverted. Although I answered properly

enough to this question, part of the company turned their eyes upon me, either on account of my pronunciation or person. I stood it, however, as well as all the polite things the young duke persisted to say to me. I will not disguise the truth; I have said it before: and as a farther proof, I own sincerely, that though this discourse caused no emotions in my heart, at least I hearkened to it with pleasure. The wisest of us all are not insensible to flattery, when accompanied with taste and delicacy.

I was then in a sort of state, scarce perceptible, and harder to be described; my eyes involuntarily turned upon the duke who was talking to me, when looking off him, I saw the young marquis leaning towards us, who seemed to overhear us: he raised himself up as soon as I saw him, and looked another way. I was so struck at his unexpected appearance, and so sensible of the scorn which I thought he expressed, that I changed colour, and found myself ill. My new admirer, who perceived it, hastily asked me what was the matter. 'I am subject,' replied I, 'to giddiness; this is a fit of it, and if I remain any longer here I shall faint away.' All which I told him to get out, not knowing any longer what countenance to put on.

The Duke of — seemed disturbed at this. It is never the custom, where the king is, to go out before he does, when it occasions any stir. However, the duke found me so much altered, that he thought fit to venture: he made signs to the exempt who had seated me, and when he was near enough to be heard, in a low voice he told him I was ill; and, to give a greater weight to the desire he had of serving me, he added, that there were reasons for it. This made me blush, and I heard people talk round me, which augmented my confusion. However, the exempt presented me his hand, and I went out followed by Geneval, who murmured greatly at my frequent indispositions, and who was much mortified not to see the entertainment: for, notwithstanding her pride, and her valuing herself upon being so well at court, it was the first play she had seen, as her husband very imprudently told me; and, perhaps, if it had not been for me, she might not have had this honour so soon. But let us come to something more interesting.

I was no sooner in the chair, but was overjoyed at being out of the house. I should infallibly have made a fine piece of work of it, which might perhaps have become publick, and forwarded what was to happen.

Let any one imagine my trouble and confusion, affectionate and tender as I was; what innocence on my side, and how many motives of suspicion for the marquis. He finds me at the play, I appear to be engaged with a very handsome young gentleman, and attentive to his discourse: no sooner do I discover him, but am out of countenance; I do more, I go out, and so seem to avoid him. All these things, united to the uneasiness arising from what Dubois had undoubtedly told him, could not suffer him to be very easy, particularly after the proofs he had already given of his jealousy.

I intended, when at home, to shut myself up and write; but how much was my anxiety increased, when the young Duke of — met me coming out of my chair! He had followed me in his, and offered his hand with an air of concern for my indisposition, which very happily was visible in my face. I made use of this pretext to get rid of him, by saying I found myself oppressed, and was going to bed. He approved of my resolution, and offered to send an eminent physician to my relief. I thanked him for his obliging offers, and when I was come to my apartment he retired, assuring me he would have the honour of waiting on me the next day, and in the mean time he would inform himself punctually of my health.

I thought I was going to be at quiet, but I had Madame De Geneval's officiousness to endure still. The honour and distinction I had procured her, rendered her polite; politickly hoping, that if we remained good friends, she should hereafter enjoy the same prerogatives. I was obliged, in civility, to wait till she pleased to quit me, which she did as soon as I was in bed.

I ordered my aunt, in her presence, to lock my doors, and let who will come, to tell them I was in bed, in order not to be disturbed in my reflections, principally on the incidents of that day.

I began with tears, which gave me relief. In effect, could there be a more

cruel case than mine? Had I one happy moment, from the time I first knew myself? One accident had followed another; I had not one moment's rest. What could I hope from what was to come! What incidents seemed ready to create new troubles! The uneasiness of the old marquis about me; his son's love and jealousy; the Duke of —'s sentiments, who had no sooner conceived, than declared them; would not all this draw on consequences? Could I expect any thing else?

I was only entering into a detail of so many perplexities, in order to take proper measures, when my aunt came into my room. 'Madam,' says she, 'here's a nobleman desires in the handsomest manner to see you.'—'Did not I tell you,' said I, with an air I had much ado to sustain, 'that I would see nobody!'—'I remember it very well,' replied the good creature; 'but the person of whom I speak says he must necessarily speak with you, and has things of consequence to communicate to you.'—'Do as I bid you,' continued I, in a tone to be obeyed, thinking it might be the duke, or the old marquis; 'fail at your peril!'

After my aunt was gone I rose, and to avoid all surprize, considering her simplicity, I drew the bolts, and then I wrote the marquis a letter, in which I ingeniously gave him an account of all that had passed. I foresaw the uneasiness he would have on account of my conversation with the duke at the comedy. I mentioned my apprehensions in relation to his father, and begged him, in order to obviate what might happen, to change my abode, and even the town, if it could be done.

I was much easier after relieving myself of the burden which weighed me down. It was after midnight before my letter was sealed, and there was no likelihood of getting it delivered then. It was of so much consequence, I was determined to trust nobody with it but Saint-Fal or Dubois: the latter had promised to call the next day, and I formed my resolution accordingly. One is no sooner at ease in one respect, but one wants to be so in another. I was extremely solicitous to know who came to see me, when Barbara brought me word of the visit I refused. Having then my wits more about me, I began to reflect on this affair, and I found I

was

was in the wrong to imagine the Duke of — would come again, it was so lately that he left me, when my aunt came with the message. It was not likely it should be him, especially knowing I was going to bed: he seemed to have more respect for me, than to commit such an indecency. I turned my conjectures another way, and as I could not but fix them upon the old marquis, I found them also as ill-grounded on many accounts, unnecessary to be mentioned. But it was not the same as to his son; he loved me, had many reasons for desiring to speak to me: had not his jealousy been one, it was very natural for him, seeing me go out on account of being indisposed, to fly to my house with concern, and learn the occasion of it, as well as several things that might regard him. I had no sooner raised this doubt, but was desirous to clear it up: I rung the bell, and according to the description my aunt gave of the gentleman she had sent away, I found my suspicion too well grounded.

Had I foreseen that my obstinacy, in not hearing my aunt, would occasion the cruel consequences it did, I should then have regretted the giving room for them. But can one foresee every thing when in perplexity? So far from repenting, I thought my lover would pass a favourable judgment on his disappointment in not seeing me, and would not condemn me in his heart. But were men born to be just?—Pardon me, O best of husbands, the injustice of this apostrophe! I retract it; my sincere love has long since excepted you from the number of those I mean.

I passed the night in great anxiety. I waked early, hoping Dubois would come, and carry my letter to the marquis. I was just up, when my aunt informed me of a visit, and asked, if she was to deny me as she did the day before. I bid her shew up, in hopes it was the man I wanted; but instead of Dubois, a gentleman of figure appeared, who named himself immediately Melicourt, lover to that dear friend. He came from the monastery where Madame De G—— had sheltered me. How troubled soever I might be in mind, out of respect for my friend, I received the gentleman with great politeness, and earnestly asked after his mistress: he delivered me a letter from her, telling me, that as soon as I had read it, he

would fully satisfy my curiosity. I opened it, and read as follows.

I Send you, my dear friend, the happy news I have received from M. De Melicourt, who will have the honour to deliver you this letter. I call it happy, because it will shortly perhaps procure me the charming pleasure of embracing you, and renewing our tender friendship. I am much obliged to him for complying so readily with the desire I had, that you should be informed by him of the good effects which followed from your kind offices. All we want is an additional interest, to terminate our affairs: I do not doubt but you will employ the Marquis of L. V. to press my discharge from the monastery. I confess it will be so much the more agreeable, as it will bring me nearer you; a happiness I am ambitious of beyond what I can express.

Our mutual friend, the discreet Lindamine, charged me to tell you, that you are ever in her thoughts. Do you think I yield to her in the least, as to vivacity of sentiments?

‘SAINT AGNES.’

I was charmed with this letter, and the hopes it gave me of my friend's affairs drawing to a conclusion. I turned to her lover, and begged him to compleat my joy, by informing me what had been done, and why I had been so long without hearing from her. ‘Alas, Madam!’ replied he with a sigh, ‘the lovely Minette would never have heard more of me but for the letters you forwarded, by which I at length learned where she was: it is to her, it is to you, I owe the happiness of having found her out. I thought her lost forever, and I was very far from persuading myself of the possibility of any such thing, which I thought so distant. You yourself shall judge, by what happened to me since the fatal day, when the artifice and credit of her unjust father found means to separate us.’

‘You knew, Mademoiselle,’ continued Melicourt, ‘in what a cruel manner I was snatched from the embraces of so beloved a wife. Had my strength equalled my rage, I should have freed myself from the hands of those cruel people who opposed the relief I would have

‘ have given her : but I was obliged to
 ‘ yield to numbers ; and it was not
 ‘ without a thousand efforts that they
 ‘ at last seized me. However, notwith-
 ‘ standing the trouble my resistance gave
 ‘ them, and my furious transports, they
 ‘ behaved with respect to me ; they had
 ‘ orders undoubtedly to use me well.
 ‘ The officer who commanded the party,
 ‘ knowing the deep concern under which
 ‘ I laboured, seemed to share in it, and
 ‘ endeavoured to pacify me by repeated
 ‘ assurances, that my confinement would
 ‘ be short ; that he knew the affair did
 ‘ not regard the state, but was entirely
 ‘ owing to the interest of a family. In
 ‘ all appearance these differences would
 ‘ neither be of any long continuance,
 ‘ nor have any farther consequences.
 ‘ Instead of answering, I held my
 ‘ tongue ; my grief was mute, and con-
 ‘ tinued in that disposition during the
 ‘ four days of my journey ; I would hear
 ‘ no reason.

‘ When I arrived at V——, they
 ‘ conducted me to the town-prison ; the
 ‘ next day the governor came to see me,
 ‘ and assured me if I behaved well, I
 ‘ should not be confined eight days. I
 ‘ asked him what was expected from
 ‘ me. “ To join,” said he, “ in setting
 ‘ aside your marriage. You may ima-
 ‘ gine, in spite of all your efforts, it
 ‘ will be so neither more nor less, for
 ‘ it must end there, the methods you
 ‘ employed being unwarrantable. Shall
 ‘ I acquaint you what must be the con-
 ‘ sequences of your refusal ? a long and
 ‘ ruinous suit between your families.
 ‘ Is it not much better prudently to
 ‘ consent to what you cannot avoid,
 ‘ than to give your adversary a handle
 ‘ to oppress you, and keep you here
 ‘ during pleasure ? Prudence requires of
 ‘ us to yield to occurrences ; and he is
 ‘ truly wise, who knows how to suit
 ‘ his conduct to the caprices of for-
 ‘ tune.”

‘ Such was the governor’s discourse
 ‘ as often as he came to see me, but
 ‘ without any effect. I assured him of
 ‘ my constancy and resolution, with a
 ‘ protestation that I defied Monsieur De
 ‘ —, from the hopes I had of being
 ‘ protected by the king’s justice, and
 ‘ his decision in my favour ; that in the
 ‘ mean time I would oppose patience to
 ‘ the persecutions prepared for me.

‘ The governor, who was undoubt-
 ‘ edly an intimate friend of Monsieur

‘ De —, and who had been pitched
 ‘ upon in order to intimidate me, seem-
 ‘ ed much dissatisfied with my steady-
 ‘ ness : however, he behaved like a gen-
 ‘ tleman ; and, barring my confinement,
 ‘ I was treated with great indulgence ;
 ‘ but he had his views, as I have plain-
 ‘ ly discovered.

‘ He came every eight days, and af-
 ‘ ter some time he ceased to talk of my
 ‘ affairs, not to provoke me ; my fear
 ‘ of putting him upon the chapter of
 ‘ dissolving the marriage restrained my
 ‘ curiosity, and hindered my asking any
 ‘ questions.

‘ In the mean time, the uneasiness I
 ‘ suffered on account of my charming
 ‘ Minette, tormented me night and day
 ‘ to the last degree : there was not a
 ‘ moment I did not lament her absence,
 ‘ and seek means of obtaining my liber-
 ‘ ty ; but I was so secured, that there
 ‘ was no hope of effecting it.

‘ After having lost these endearing
 ‘ hopes, I employed myself in endea-
 ‘ vouring to inform my father of the
 ‘ place of my confinement, that he
 ‘ might exert his power for my deli-
 ‘ very : this seemed less difficult than
 ‘ making my escape. The turnkey who
 ‘ attended me, and whom I had been
 ‘ a long time gaining by little gratifica-
 ‘ tions, and formal promises of making
 ‘ his fortune upon obtaining my liber-
 ‘ ty, if he would come into my mea-
 ‘ sures, appeared fit for my purpose. I
 ‘ flattered myself the more, because
 ‘ he seemed compassionate, and would
 ‘ sometimes of his own accord bewail
 ‘ his being engaged in an employment,
 ‘ to which he had, he said, such a re-
 ‘ pugnance and antipathy. This con-
 ‘ fidence seemed to me a good omen ;
 ‘ and when I imagined I had wrought
 ‘ him to that pitch of compassion I de-
 ‘ fired, I opened myself one day to
 ‘ him, and proposed to him, under
 ‘ promise of a good reward, to deliver
 ‘ a letter I had wrote to my father. He
 ‘ seemed struck at the proposition, and
 ‘ expressed his dislike of it, by repre-
 ‘ senting the punishments assigned for
 ‘ those who betrayed their trust on the like
 ‘ occasions : to enforce which, he cited
 ‘ several examples, the very rehearsal
 ‘ of which was really shocking ; and he
 ‘ did it so pathetically in his way, that he
 ‘ seemed much terrified. I found him
 ‘ so averse this first time, that I did not
 ‘ press him any farther : I thought it
 ‘ best

best to wait another day to speak again, and prepare him by degrees: thus he insensibly accustomed himself to my proposals.

It happened as I guessed; the turnkey yielded at last, and charged himself with my packet, promising it should be delivered as directed, and that I should have an answer. These fair hopes gave some truce to my pain, and I waited impatiently the issue. The time seemed insupportably long, and there were now fifteen whole days passed away without hearing one word. He exhorted me to have patience, assuring it would not be long before I was satisfied. As a proof that I ought not to be uneasy, the turnkey informed me how he had contrived to be certain of the packet's being delivered, without running any risk. He had sent his brother, as he assured me, who was to deliver my letter himself, and bring back an answer. This seemed so feasible, that I applauded it, and easily believed all he said on the subject.

I had wrote a letter to my dear Minette, wherein I assured her of being for ever constant. As I was ignorant what became of her, I desired my father to get this letter delivered wherever she was, and to send her answer. I was prepared on every side, and made no doubt but that I had taken care to be served according to my wishes. A prisoner has time to think of every thing.

One night, being more impatient than ever, and lamenting bitterly that I had no news, I heard an unusual noise of bolts, which surprized me. I was alone in my tower. It could be only to me they came; and, unless it were something very pressing, it was not then an hour for any body to visit me: in fine, it was my turnkey. Joy in his countenance promised good news, and immediately raised my spirits. Nothing but tidings of my letters, or my liberty, that could occasion his visit or his looks. I eagerly asked him what I was to expect. "See," said he, delivering me a packet of letters, "to what danger I have exposed myself! I say no more. Adieu. I tremble! My fidelity must not be suspected. My brother is but just arrived, and notwithstanding the danger in coming at this time, I could

not withstand the pleasure of easing your concern, and affording you a good night." I thought this regard of his so kind, that in order to give him an early instance of my acknowledgment, I drew a small diamond from my finger, and made him a present of it, with assurances that I would not stop there. The turnkey went away well satisfied; but I was certainly more so at that time than he.

I was no sooner alone, but I opened my packet in great haste: it contained two letters; the first was from my father, the other from my wife. I found my father's hand somewhat different from what it used to be, but I took very little notice of it; as for the second, signed Minette, I thought of nothing but the pleasure I enjoyed. It was the first I ever received from her, and only delayed by kissing a thousand times the testimony I expected of her love. However eager I might be to know the reasons of my confinement, love prevailed over curiosity. Here is Minette's letter.

I Thought I could not refuse, Sir, "an answer to your letter. I am sorry for what you suffered upon my account. I advise you to contribute to your enlargement, by submitting to what is expected from you. For my part, I thought myself obliged to obey a parent; and if I am the only cause of your troubles, I remove that obstacle, by releasing you from any engagement between us. I had some scruple in the affair; but I have been informed the first duty of a daughter is to obey her father, and that all engagements are void which are made without the consent of those who brought us into this world. I hope you will have sense and resolution enough to conform yourself to so warrantable an excuse, and that your esteem for me is such as not to oppose my tranquillity."

I thought this letter so cruel, and it overwhelmed me with so violent a grief, I had like to have fainted away. Despair alone preserved my senses. "Perfidious wretch!" I cried, throwing the letter disdainfully away, "could I expect such a barbarous return? So much love and constancy, did they deserve a change so odious?"

I was

‘ I was two hours in a state as painful
 ‘ to feel as to describe; I threw out a
 ‘ thousand imprecations against the un-
 ‘ grateful creature, and stopped twenty
 ‘ times before I could read over my fa-
 ‘ ther’s letter. He expressed great ten-
 ‘ derness, exhorting me to have pati-
 ‘ ence, and promised I should soon be
 ‘ at liberty, provided I renounced my
 ‘ marriage. He very frankly confessed,
 ‘ that Minette’s father had much the
 ‘ better interest, and that I should pe-
 ‘ rish in prison if I did not submit to
 ‘ power, as he had done. He gave me
 ‘ an account of the perfidy of my mis-
 ‘ tress, who had held out but a few
 ‘ days; and, to obtain her pardon, had
 ‘ accepted of a husband recommended
 ‘ by her relations, to whom she was to
 ‘ be married in eight days. He ex-
 ‘ horted me to imitate her, assuring me
 ‘ that I should be restored to my liber-
 ‘ ty as soon as I should take such a re-
 ‘ solution. I was not able to go through
 ‘ the letter, I had too much of it al-
 ‘ ready: the night was spent in walk-
 ‘ ing about my chamber, and complain-
 ‘ ing of my perfidious mistress.

‘ I was three days and three nights
 ‘ without taking any thing, and it was
 ‘ the fourth day, that being ashamed of
 ‘ my folly, I resolved on declaring I had
 ‘ no farther thoughts of the unfaithful
 ‘ Minette; and that since she had been
 ‘ capable of deceiving me, I would ne-
 ‘ ver hear her named. I had no sooner
 ‘ explained myself on this subject, and
 ‘ consented to the setting aside my mar-
 ‘ riage, but I was promised my liberty on
 ‘ this condition, that I should return to
 ‘ my father, and never more endeavour
 ‘ to see my ungrateful mistress. I was
 ‘ too angry to make any difficulty up-
 ‘ on that head. My hatred, so natu-
 ‘ rally expressed, forwarded my liber-
 ‘ ty, and it was granted three days
 ‘ after.

‘ As soon as I was at liberty, I went
 ‘ to my father. He confirmed Minette’s
 ‘ perfidy, and shewed me a letter, setting
 ‘ forth all it’s circumstances. He told
 ‘ me what steps he had taken to pro-
 ‘ cure my liberty, which proved inef-
 ‘ fectual, through the great credit which
 ‘ Minette’s father had employed: he
 ‘ told me, however, that in spite of all
 ‘ his interest, his adversary would have
 ‘ had the worst of it; because, as my fa-
 ‘ ther acted incognito, he must have
 ‘ been plaintiff in the trial, without a

‘ defendant, on account of his refusing
 ‘ his own daughter, if I had not given
 ‘ my consent for the annulling the mar-
 ‘ riage. This occasioned a letter from
 ‘ court, by which he was given to un-
 ‘ derstand, that if he pushed things any
 ‘ farther, he should never see me again;
 ‘ a menace that stopped him short, by
 ‘ reason of the tenderness he had for
 ‘ me.

‘ Above six months after, talking
 ‘ with my relations about my confine-
 ‘ ment, and telling them after what
 ‘ manner I found means to write to my
 ‘ father, I understood he had never re-
 ‘ ceived my letter. This incident asto-
 ‘ nished me; and I greatly surprized
 ‘ my father in my turn, when I pro-
 ‘ duced the pretended letter I thought
 ‘ he had writ. He was himself almost
 ‘ mistaken in the hand, so little diffe-
 ‘ rence there was between it and his
 ‘ own. He assured me he never wrote
 ‘ to me; and notwithstanding the pains
 ‘ he took to find out how they could
 ‘ counterfeit his hand, he never could
 ‘ clear up the affair, and it is but late-
 ‘ ly that this mystery was brought to
 ‘ light.

‘ However, this instance of forgery
 ‘ gave me some suspicion. I acquaint-
 ‘ ed my father with it, but he was the
 ‘ innocent cause that I did not examine
 ‘ things with proper attention. The
 ‘ confidence he was in of Minette’s in-
 ‘ fidelity, which had been confirmed to
 ‘ him from different hands, passed even
 ‘ to me; and I thought there was so
 ‘ much reason to forget her, that I should
 ‘ in time have attained it.

‘ For some months I was exceeding
 ‘ melancholy; notwithstanding my en-
 ‘ deavours, I could not forget the un-
 ‘ grateful Mademoiselle-De ——. I
 ‘ strove, indeed, to divert my thoughts
 ‘ from her; but her dear idea had taken
 ‘ too deep root in my heart to be so
 ‘ easily torn away. Sometimes resent-
 ‘ ment gave me ease, but it soon vanish-
 ‘ ed; and after all my projects to forget
 ‘ her, I found myself the most unfor-
 ‘ tunate and most enamoured of man-
 ‘ kind.

‘ But my mother, who suffered pro-
 ‘ digiously to see me waste away by de-
 ‘ grees, and feared at last to lose me,
 ‘ thought if she could but contrive to
 ‘ give me an inclination for somebody
 ‘ else, that I should recover in time;
 ‘ and forget the perfidious Minette.

To this effect, she drew much company to the house, and put me under an obligation, as is usual, of assisting in the honours of the assembly which was constantly held. All the neighbourhood afforded of handsome young ladies came to it. One in particular, about fourteen, of a brown complexion, and a cheerful amiable character, distinguished herself, and was admired by all the world. She was always merry, and had something new; to be acquainted with her, and desire to love her, was the same thing. At first I only looked at her, and considered how well she deserved the praises given her: but a custom of seeing her soon had a farther effect; I wished to share in her friendship. Time could not be more agreeably spent; she did not seem averse to me, and was the most obliging creature in the world: the more I knew her, the more I was enchanted. My mother perceived it, and being willing to snatch an opportunity she had been purposely waiting for, she spoke to the young lady's mother, named me for her daughter, and advanced matters with so much expedition, that three days after she told me, if I was in love with Mademoiselle De —, as she had no room to doubt, I should be her husband in eight days.

Any body but myself would have been transported with such an expectation. The lady in question was exceeding lovely; a thousand good qualities enhanced her charms: they had seduced me in appearance; yet it was admiration, and not love, which affected me, as I discovered when my mother proposed her for a wife; instead of the comfort she had promised herself, she met with nothing but trouble and perplexity.

This unexpected coldness surprized her. She asked what could occasion it; and whether it were possible, after having shewn such a deference for Mademoiselle De —, that I should hesitate to thank her for her trouble, in getting me preferred to a number of others who sighed for her. I loved my mother too well to disguise the matter; I told her sincerely how I was affected. The proposed lady's charms had sensibly touched me; but I continued to love the perfidious Minette. Her image was more deeply rooted than

ever in my heart, when she seemed just upon the point of being banished from it. I bemoaned my weakness; I asked a thousand pardons for it of the best of mothers; but I could not extort from myself a promise to comply with what she had engaged her word for. It was to no purpose for her to remonstrate the injury I did myself thereby, the folly of a constancy so ill deserved, and the resentment of Mademoiselle De — and of her family, if I persisted in my sentiments. I owned the justness of her reflections, but at the same time declared, that if they drove me to this marriage, how flattering soever it might appear, they would render me the most unhappy of mankind.

My mother, moved with all I had said on this occasion, promised me so to manage matters, that my refusal should not appear; and in order to it, she would find pretences for a delay, the better to break off the affair. This goodness, this condescension, gained upon me so much, and appeared so endearing, that I expressed my acknowledgments in the most lively and respectful terms. I thought I was myself again, and foresaw what was to happen.

Nevertheless, my father, who was not so complaisant as she in giving in to my way of thinking, called my mother's goodness imprudence, and would not join in it. He told me, that I did not understand my visions; and told me sternly, he expected me to agree to the marriage, which had only been concerted in complaisance to me. It was in vain for me to try his paternal tenderness; he would hear no reason. My father reminded me of the trouble I had already occasioned through his fond complaisance, and assured me, that if I took the way to give him more, he would make me know who was master, and that I expected to be obeyed.

Things were in this posture, when a stranger arrived and enquired for me: it was high time; I was on the brink of being tied for ever, and after long struggles sinking under a father's authority; but the letters that were delivered changed the face of affairs, and gave me a legal right of protesting against my intended marriage. I was transported with joy to think the charming, dear Minette, was constant,

‘and I blushed for having been capable of suspecting her fidelity. I bewailed her condition, and my father joined with me in detesting the cruelty of her relations, in barbarously sacrificing her to vile interest: we took advice concerning the violence offered this adorable person: we consulted the laws, and the most eminent lawyers; they were of opinion, that Minette should protest against her vows, and the suit be revived which had been carried on, to have her acknowledged for the daughter of Monsieur De ——. My father would not let me appear in the affair, but managed it in the same manner as Monsieur De —— had done before, and this with so much address, that the affair was on the point of being determined in three months time.

‘Monsieur De ——, who little expected to see this affair renewed again, which so nearly concerned him, thought to confound his secret enemies with the same facility as before; but he found things very much altered: his protector was dead, and the successor not altogether so partial in his favour. He was obliged now to appear, and put in his answer to the strong attacks that were made against him. As the proofs were clear as the day, he was at last condemned to acknowledge Minette for his daughter; and, on account of his former behaviour, and the violence he had employed, he was forbid the sight of her till farther orders.

‘The verbal process of this affair having been sent to Rome, the holy father named commissaries to examine it; and, after a mature deliberation, it was determined that the nuncio should decide it.

‘This, Mademoiselle,’ continued Melicourt, ‘is the present posture of our affairs; and therefore your charming friend begs your assistance. The justice of her cause is all she has to depend on. My father has not the honour to know our judge; and we have some reason to fear he will not be favourable to us, not only from the interest that Monsieur De —— may still have, which he will undoubtedly exert on this occasion, but even from the consequences of such an indulgence, which may become a precedent for others in the same case.

‘As to Monsieur De ——,’ added Melicourt, ‘he is exasperated against his daughter; and declares, that if she is freed from her vows, he will never see her: his wife joins with him; and, without a miracle, there is no room to believe he will ever lay aside this unjust prejudice.

‘The powerful party my father has formed for us in the province, has declared in our favour, and promises, if the nuncio restores Minette to her liberty, so unjustly taken away, we shall be married after the proper forms have been observed; in this they generally agree. I went in person to acquaint Saint Agnes with these particulars; she was equally pleased with me, and shewed so great an earnestness, that you, Mademoiselle,’ said this constant lover, ‘should share in our joy, that I am come with zeal to impart to you this transaction. I beg you to continue to us both your friendship, which we value beyond expression.’

Thus did Melicourt finish his story. I observed him, during his discourse, and found him to be worthy my charming friend. I heartily thanked him for his complaisance; and I promised to contribute every thing in my power to promote his interest, which I earnestly embraced, and would certainly employ all my credit in an affair wherein I took so great a share. He seemed satisfied with these assurances: and, to leave him no room to doubt of my being in earnest, I told him I was that moment writing to the person Saint Agnes had mentioned, and that I hoped I should know that very day if I might depend upon those I intended to employ. I took my pen, and inserted this request in my letter to the marquis, which I recommended in a manner the most prevalent to render it effectual.

Dubois, whom I impatiently expected, never came. I could not imagine how to account for this delay: it was now past noon, and my uneasiness became so manifestly visible, that Melicourt perceiving it, asked me the cause of it. I could not resist the desire he shewed of making me easy; I thought I saw in him a second Saint Agnes; besides, I imagined myself in so much danger, till I had acquainted the marquis, that I ought to hazard the secret,

in order to get a letter delivered to my lover, on which I thought my safety depended. I could trust Melicourt with the commission, which he joyfully accepted, and promised to bring me an answer in less than half an hour. I was overjoyed at this; and giving him his instructions, he set out. Ought I to have expected what he brought me back? O Heaven! I tremble at this day, when I think on the cruel answer I received. If any one has shared in the preceding perplexities I have undergone, let them continue their pity for me; they will shortly see whether I deserved it, and whether the peace and prosperity I actually enjoy have not been bought by all that is most sensible to a woman, whose heart has ever been so tender and faithful as mine.

It was almost three in the afternoon, and no Melicourt yet returned. Let any one imagine what I suffered; a thousand things came into my head upon this delay. To crown my misfortune, Madame De Geneval entered my chamber, telling me the marquis was come, who followed her in. How hard is it to affect tranquillity when inwardly racked with cares! and how much it has cost me to accustom myself to this policy, so necessary in the world, which obliges one to be perpetually disguised! I was too much a novice in this art, to assume that air which eludes the eye of the curious. The old marquis perceived the constraint I was under, and asked me, (with a politeness which so much distinguishes people of a certain quality) if he was not come at an improper time. I could not help blushing at his penetration; however, I answered luckily enough, attributing the trouble I could not hide to an indisposition that hung upon me. To recover myself, and avoid a conversation, whereof I dreaded the consequences, I asked his lordship's leave to continue my work; this gave me an opportunity of looking down, for I dreaded to meet his eyes. Though in years, he had a piercing look, which seemed to read one's very thoughts. Whether it was prejudice or fear, every time he looked me in the face, I imagined his eyes said, 'Ah, Jenny, Jenny! it is to no purpose to hide yourself from me; I read the very motions of of your heart.' One may judge if I was very easy under such an apprehension.

Any body but myself, in these circumstances, would have foreseen that Melicourt might return with a letter, or perhaps have some secrets to communicate, and therefore would have absented themselves for a moment, under pretence of giving orders to a servant. It is commonly said, that the simplest girl has always sense enough to manage what regards her heart: I ingenuously own myself not to be of that number. I thought the least action would render me suspected, and even betray me.

When my eyes met those of the old marquis, I cast them quickly down again in great confusion; I thought he came only to make discoveries, and that I was to guard against all that might lay me open. Upon this, I put on a formal countenance; my discourse was perplexed, and in my agitation I often answered without understanding what was said, or knowing what I answered.

The old marquis, too quick-sighted not to see the disorder I was in, curious perhaps to augment it, or find out the meaning of it, drew near, and began to be very sweet, but in the most refined manner in the world. Madame De Geneval applauded him, undoubtedly vexed, though willing to make her court. For my part, totally absent, I scarce gave him an answer; a forced smile often supplied the place of a real one. 'Confess, Madam,' said the marquis to Geneval, playing with a ball of silk, 'that the countess has a complexion not to be matched. Do you observe the delicacy of her features, and those little dimples which form themselves when that pretty mouth is going to utter the least syllable?' Perplexed as I was, I could not help smiling from time to time every feature received it's encomium; and letting none escape him, his imagination, more lively than could be expected for his age, seemed transported when he spoke of all the charms with which he flattered me.

I was handsome; I have said so before, and I am sorry I am obliged to repeat it, and to speak of myself with less reserve than I would chuse; but I cannot give a probability to certain transports, without ingenuously telling what gave them birth. The marquis was surprizing in that respect. I was some time before I could account for it; his curious looks betrayed him. The posture

ture I was in shewed my breast, notwithstanding it's being covered, on the least motion; the fine turn and whiteness of it threw the old gentleman into extasies: he talked to me on this subject in expressions that did not betray his years; and this in such a manner, as to make no impression on any one but myself.

The name of father to the man I adored, gave the old marquis such an influence over me, and I had conceived such respect for him, both through fear, and my regard for his son, that I had not courage to contradict several expressions, I should certainly have interrupted but from these motives. I cannot tell what the old courtier thought, but to me it did not seem that my condescension gave him room to exceed the bounds of a certain decency. His politeness gave me great pleasure, and kept me in countenance. Geneval was quite otherwise; every trifle made her familiar: and if I had not behaved with a serious air in her regard, her little fooleries, and the liberty which she would have taken, might have encouraged the marquis to exceed the limits my discretion had prescribed to the complaisance I thought myself obliged to shew him. But I had not the same regard for her, when leaning over my work, and pretending to romp, she had maliciously removed the handkerchief which covered my breast, and occasioned great sprightliness from the marquis. I gave them both so severe a look, that it was easy to comprehend I was not to be jested with too far, nor of a temper to suffer such sort of behaviour. The air I put on, made the marquis reassume that respect for me he thought my due; and from that time, on all occasions, he never forgot himself. So true it is, that a virtuous woman may keep men at a distance if she pleases; whenever they behave otherwise, she can only blame herself for her want of reserve. Men endeavour to divert us; and, under that pretence, take too great freedoms. Unhappy is that young woman, who defends herself in mirth; she must lose ground. Seriousness is the shield of virtue; those are wise who know how to employ it in a proper manner.

Another thing, against which young women ought to be upon their guard, is their own sex; and, above all, never to contract a friendship with any wo-

man, unless they be very sure of her character. The commerce of too familiar a she-friend, is often more dangerous than that of the most enterprising man. And why? Because we are aware of a lover, whose vivacity and too great freedoms proclaim his designs: whereas we resign ourselves up with confidence to a she-friend, who passes for such. The great secret never to become their prey, is to break off all commerce with such, who, under pretence of friendship, communicate certain secrets, or who artfully enter into dangerous particulars. It is so far from being an advantage for a young woman to be informed from the knowledge of another, for satisfying an inquisitive curiosity, to which they are unhappily inclined from the time they begin to know themselves, that she ought to avoid all that gives light into certain things. Curiosity is a rock fatal to virtue. I cannot repeat it too often. Young women who have a mind to know, are not long before they practise.

I began to grow very uneasy at the eagerness of the old marquis, and Geneval's foolish talk; who, to please him, persisted in flattering his frenzy; when Melicourt, thinking me alone, and who knew I expected him with impatience, entered without sending in his name, with a letter in his hand. I turned pale, and confounded as I was, could scarce rise to receive him.

The old marquis, observing me, easily saw the trouble I was in; he took no notice of it, but got up and returned a bow to Saint Agnes's lover; who, judging him, by the marks of distinction he wore, to be a man of quality, was very respectful. Madame De Geneval, who had never seen Melicourt before, and who imagined, by the little ceremony which I used with him, that it was some old acquaintance, (not being able to distinguish that it proceeded from my perplexity) asked me in my ear, if the gentleman was a relation, or my countryman. I answered without reflection, 'Yes.'—'By all means, then,' continued she in a low voice, but designed to be heard, 'we must keep him to supper.' I answered this nonsense (pardon the expression) with silence. We were all seated again: the old marquis and Melicourt were entered into conversation. As this young country gentleman had a great deal of wit, he ac-

quitted

mitted himself so as to deserve applause. Melicourt, who had his own affair as much at heart as mine, recounted the history of his mistress from one end to the other, and that with a view, without doubt, to interest the marquis in his favour; who, as he fought all occasions of being acquainted with me, and perhaps of pleasing me, turned and asked if I interested myself in the affair of the beautiful nun. I was too much her friend to hesitate in my answer. 'Well then, Madam,' cried the marquis, 'I promise my good offices; I am an intimate friend of Monsieur De —, who has great interest in affairs of this nature.' — 'Sir,' continued he, addressing himself to Melicourt, 'please to take the trouble of sending me an exact memorial of the affair, and I will certainly give this lady a good account of it.'

I thanked the old marquis with an air of earnestness, which convinced him how warmly I espoused my friend's cause. Courtiers take all opportunities of commending; I received, upon this subject, a compliment on my good nature. Melicourt joined with him; and as the conversation rolled upon this topic, I was less uneasy than before. Nevertheless, the old marquis's visit began to grow troublesome; I could think of no artifice to get rid of him. I was extremely impatient to hear of his son. Melicourt had, undoubtedly, some news for me. How disagreeable it is to be under constraint in the like case! Nobody could suffer more than I did; but patience was my only remedy, not being yet come to the end of my troubles.

My good and very simple aunt, who by extreme good luck happened to be in my anti-chamber, and whom I had ordered to let nobody in without giving me notice, (a thing, however, she had quite forgot as to Melicourt) remembered it then, and came to tell me there was a gentleman who had dined with me desired to see me. I could not help blushing, upon reflection, fearing some untoward accident. I got up, and went out, excusing myself to the company. It was Saint Fal; a moment later he had entered. 'Ah, Heavens!' cried I, 'what was you going to do? Fly! the old marquis is here!' — 'Good God! who would have thought it?' replied the count; 'his being

here is very unseasonable: I have a thousand things to say to you. I will brush off: try to shorten the visit, and I will return as soon as my uncle is gone.' — 'What news from the marquis?' said I to him, conducting him to the door. 'Madam,' answered Saint Fal. Whilst the count was speaking and opening the door, somebody knocked. I was more dead than alive. 'Perhaps it is your cousin,' cried I, 'for who else can come to see me? If it is he,' added I, 'let him be gone.' — 'You need not fear that,' continued Saint Fal, 'it is certainly not him; I wish to God it were! We would find ways enough to hide him from his father.' — 'What do you mean?' replied I, confounded; 'what is the matter?' Saint Fal had no time to reply; they knocked again. I bethought myself of putting him into the kitchen, to wait whilst the door was opened, whither he went. As for myself, who have always been fearful, and being otherwise moved with what Saint Fal had just said to me, I went into my apartment, and ordered Barbara to open the door. I had scarce any life in me, and sat down to my work in so much disorder, that it might easily be observed.

The old marquis taking but too much notice of it, whispered in my ear with an air of intimacy, to know if any body had made me uneasy, or if any private reason occasioned my trouble, offering his service, in case he were so happy, that I should have any occasion to make use of it. I was going to answer, when Barbara brought in word of the Duke De — being there. 'How unfortunate am I!' said I to myself, and rising to receive him. 'Is it possible that vexations should thus spring up on all sides!' I received him, notwithstanding the compliments this lord made me, without appearing uneasy. We had taken our seats, and the discourse began to roll on the raillery the young duke bestowed on the marquis's taste and regard for handsome women, when Barbara entered my chamber in a fright, crying, 'Thieves!' We all of us got up: I could not guess at the cause of her fears. I asked her in great apprehension, what thieves she meant. 'In the name of God, Madam!' cried she, 'desire these gentlemen to be so charitable as to go into the kitchen; perhaps he that went down just now was not

‘not alone, for he looked as bold as if he feared nobody.’

Though I was much concerned to find that Saint Fal’s going out of the kitchen, where I had desired him to wait, and of which Barbara was entirely ignorant, had occasioned her outcries: notwithstanding my uneasiness, I say, her mistake made me smile to myself. I was under the necessity, nevertheless, to affect a seeming terror, in order to give no umbrage. As I did not play my part ill, neither the young duke nor the marquis would suffer me to stir, but went with Melicourt and Barbara to search the apartment; not a hole or corner escaped my credulous aunt. During this scrutiny, a glove with a gold fringe was discovered; the duke laid hold on it, and returned to me in triumph. ‘Faith, Madam,’ said he with a smile, ‘this thief is certainly a beau, and ought to be pardoned for the sake of the glove.’ I trembled for fear it should be known; it belonged to Saint Fal, who had dropped it: luckily no notice was taken. The duke, pleasant as he was, and willing to divert me, was very merry on the subject of the thief and the glove. He bantered Barbara, pretending to believe she had other reasons for crying out. He affirmed with a grave face, which set the company a laughing, that the person who made his escape was certainly an humble servant; adding, that if my chamber-maid, as he was pleased to call her, would own the truth, we should be convinced he was not mistaken.

The tone in which this banter was uttered, and the figure of my poor aunt affording a humorous contrast to the imputation, enlivened the conversation to that degree, that I was vexed to be obliged to laugh, when in reality I had so little reason: but I was soon punished. Word was brought the marquis, that his time for being at court drew on. I could discover, by the duke’s countenance, that he would willingly have staid with me; but as I had not the same reasons for obliging him as I had in regard of the old marquis, I had courage enough to declare my intention of writing a letter, not to lose the opportunity of M. De Melicourt, who was so obliging as to take that trouble. This feint succeeded: the duke and the marquis took their leave, protesting they had not been so agreeably diverted a long time,

I appeared obliged by their civilities, though in my heart I sincerely wished it were the last time I should receive the like from either of them.

The moment Melicourt and I were alone, I asked with great earnestness for the marquis’s letter. ‘I am afraid,’ replied he, giving the letter, ‘you will not be pleased with it; and I think myself very unfortunate to have served you so ill the first time.’ This preamble made me shudder, and open the paper in a hurry; the contents were as follow.

‘I Am surprized, Mademoiselle, that you should take the trouble of giving me an account of your behaviour, which I have no right to expect. My regard for you was too great to disapprove of the civilities which seem due to the rank and merit of the Duke De —. If he should have the same designs as I had, the satisfaction of having put the first hand to making your fortune, at least, is mine. I am far from consulting my own interests on this occasion, much more from complaining. The sacrifice would not be complete, and reproaches still more unseasonable, considering the delicacy of sentiments on which I value myself. You received the duke’s visit; you were at the play together, because you thought it depended on yourself: taste must not be disputed. I wish you, Mademoiselle, greater happiness than myself, and shall be careful not to disturb your new engagements by a presence equally disagreeable to you, as unprofitable to myself. This is all. Farewell for ever.’

‘THE MARQUIS OF L.V.’

‘Just Heavens!’ cried I, bursting into tears after reading the letter, ‘can any one be so unjust? Can so much love be repaid with such ingratitude? Cruel man!’ cried I, casting a melancholy look on the fatal letter, ‘how have I deserved to be made so unhappy!’ Saint Fal entered as I was speaking, much moved at my condition. ‘Ah, Mademoiselle!’ cried he, looking strangely on Melicourt, whom he did not know, ‘mitigate your grief, it will be soon over. Pardon the author; his fault is owing to the excess of

of his passion. — 'No, my lord!' answered I, 'he loves me not, nor ever did. He ought to know me; but since he doubts my constancy, I will give him a convincing proof. In the name of all that is dear, assist me in flying from a climate I detest. Alas! I ought to have dreaded it. Fool that I was,' continued I, lifting up my eyes, 'dear Saint Anges, when I left you! Why did I not follow the discreet Linda-mine? Why did I not make my escape? My heart would now have been at ease; I should have learned by degrees to wean my affections from the world; and if I must have been unjustly suspected, and no longer beloved, at least, through custom, I might have found my comfort in seeking a better world. See the fruits, or rather the punishment, of the errors of headstrong youth. Ah, marquis, marquis! was this blow reserved for my lively tenderness in your regard? I lose you; you fly me, I am nothing! Pardon, dear lover, the vexations I have given you, and my unhappiness in displeasing you; your revenge shall be ample, regret shall end my life!'

Saint Fal, always tender and exquisite in his sentiments, behaved with his usual generosity. Instead of taking this advantage in behalf of his own passion, he exerted himself in favour of his kinsman, and endeavoured to support my affection for him, of which my extreme grief was, alas! too plain a proof. Two days, for so long my transports continued, did he pursue the dictates of that noble disinterestedness he professed to cultivate. Melicourt, who had affairs on his hands, employed his leisure hours in pacifying me, but all in vain; death was the object of my hopes. The marquis appeared no more; at last they owned he was gone to join his regiment in Germany, where the war was broke out. How cruelly was I alarmed at this news! I would see nobody. Saint Fal, the complaisant Saint Fal, exhausted to no purpose his whole stock of good nature; I could scarce bear with him: the old marquis was the only one I did not dare refuse, on account of that ascendant I have mentioned elsewhere; but I was so melancholy, that if he had not guessed the reason, he must necessarily have discerned an alteration in me; yet he was complaisant enough to suit himself

to my humour. As for the duke, he was quite at a nonplus, I having given him a very cold reception the next day, though he brought me a handsome gratification he had obtained for me, and which occasioned a sad mistake, as I shall relate afterwards. I explained myself with so much resolution on the subject of his visits, that he durst seldom appear, notwithstanding his easy behaviour; a strong proof of a woman's power when beloved: her tyranny knows no bounds, and it is submitted to the more servilely, as a dread of displeasing is the very foundation of her empire. The duke, the old marquis, and tender Saint Fal, were all in this situation, and the more to be pitied, as their passion met with no encouragement.

Eight days passed on without coming to any resolution; sometimes I was for shutting myself up in a monastery, at other times I thought of going home, and throwing myself at my father and mother's feet, to punish what I then called an error, by returning to my primitive mean condition. Frequently I was upon the point of owning myself to my aunt; nothing but my vanity prevented me. In fine, on the ninth day I wrote to Saint Fal, desiring he would come to me immediately. My resolution was fixed. Alas, how many tears were shed! but virtue remained triumphant. I was determined to throw myself into a cloister, and employ the repeated proffers Saint Fal had so often made of serving me, to be received a nun, on which I was absolutely bent. How little do women, at the age I then was, know themselves! how cautious ought they to be, when drove precipitately into any state of life! Oftentimes their weakness hurries them into extremes; a love-quarrel, the inconstancy of an admirer, misleads their mind, or rather judgment. Thus intoxicated, a young woman takes a resolution, and either marries a rival for whom she has no relish, or becomes a nun without a vocation. And what is the consequence! The cloud vanishes, she comes to herself, and looks back with horror on the step she has taken, the state in which she is engaged: grief and tears the only remedy left. Death is called upon, but to youth it's approaches are but slow, and is a thousand times undergone before it comes. These reflections

tions are pardonable; I write for my own sex, as I declared from the beginning, and cannot too much inculcate, that virtue ought to be their only aim: where this is the case, they run none of those hazards I mention; it preserves them, because it never exposes it's followers.

Saint Fal was too assiduous not to fly at my summons. The moment he appeared: 'Come, my lord,' said I, 'crown the work you have begun; you are the only person I rely upon. May I flatter myself I am not deceived?'—'Can you question my sincerity?' replied he with an air that proved it. 'Speak, charming Jenny! nothing appears impossible to the zeal I have for your service. Would you have me overtake the marquis, reproach him for his injustice, force him——' 'No,' answered I, with greater tranquillity than he could expect, 'your kinsman's eyes are opened, love had blinded him: he now sees the great distance between us, he blushes at his own weakness, and will atone for it by abandoning me. He is too dear for me to blame his behaviour, which needs not have been so harsh; but I respect even his severities. Let us say no more on this subject, dear count,' continued I, unable to restrain my tears; 'those happy moments, wherein I indulged so flattering an illusion, must be forgot, and amends made by a more regular conduct, for the follies into which a foolish passion hurried me. My design is to throw myself into a convent, and there, in the lowest station, humble that vanity I have too much encouraged. Heaven, in pity of my youth, I may say innocence, will give me strength to break through my bonds; my constant prayer will be, to free my heart from the image too deeply engraved there; my tears, continually poured out before it's altars, will prevail, perhaps, and obtain for me that peace, from which at present I am, alas! much estranged.'

This was uttered with such abundance of tears, that the compassionate Saint Fal was moved to sympathize with me. After repeating how large a share he bore in my affliction, he remonstrated in the most lively manner, how unreasonable such a conduct would be, and the danger I should incur of being miserable

for life. He artfully insinuated, such a state did not suit my temper; that I should not sooner make my vows, but despair would be the consequence. He drew a lively picture of a nun without a vocation; emphatically pointed out the tortures arising from a distaste to her way of life, her subjection and humiliation increasing every day; he even introduced the article of salvation, and seemed to doubt it, after so much pains employed to secure it: in fine, he talked like one inspired; and, if he did not shake my resolution, he gave me at least great uneasiness.

Saint Fal had his motives for exerting himself against my retreat; he still had hopes, which made it natural enough. From the vexations and dangers he had represented, he turned to a proposal of a middle state, a kind of retreat, without renouncing the world entirely. 'Why should any one,' said he, 'become a slave, that may live in a state of independence? A cloister is a sure refuge for persons who are timorous, or liable to trip: they are highly to be commended for shutting themselves up, and cutting off all occasions of sin. But you, charming Jenny, whose mind is formed, and whose morals are the dictates of the strictest virtue, to what purpose should you arm yourself against imaginary dangers, and lay a constraint on a temper never designed to be buried in a convent? At present you have an irksome disrelish for the world. Well, make yourself easy; but do not irrevocably renounce it, lest so hasty a determination should change, and then you need not repent in vain. Nobody can hinder you from living retired. Go to another part; you need only pretend a journey; take a borrowed name, and see no company. Of my own accord, I will banish myself from your retirement, though never so inviting by your presence. How do you know, lovely Jenny, but in a little time, the marquis, discovering his own injustice, may come and protest at your feet——' 'Ah! though he should change his mind,' replied I, interrupting, 'and should return, I never will behold more a man who was capable of suspecting me. No, count, though I love the ingrate even more than my life, yet in vain would he seek to see me again. I repeat it: nothing

nothing can alter my mind on this article; my resolution is fixed, and the world shall not shake it.

Instead of contradicting me, Saint Fal seemed to come into my measures; he agreed with me, that his kinsman deserved I should act with resolution; but still insisted on the manner of regulating my conduct in leaving him.

Your imagination, charming Jenny, said he, is lively, and your heart has too much of the same quality, to remain in a state of indifference, if I could suppose such a thing, after so tender a passion: your heart will carry the day; it is made for love, and will always love. Would to Heaven, in changing its object, it may be remembered that you have an admirer!

The count was doubtless going to speak of himself, when my aunt lighted a person into the room, whom I presently knew to be the young duke. Pray, Madam, said she, do not be angry; I refused to let his highness, for so she styled all that were richly dressed, come up; but he said he must speak with you about business, that would admit of no delay. I rose to receive this visit, unseasonable as it was: my eyes shewed plainly I had been crying. Good God! cried the duke, placing me in my chair, are you already acquainted with the affair which brought me hither? By the trouble you are in, I have no room to doubt it. But really, Madam, you need not be very uneasy; you have friends who will give convincing proofs of their regard. Do not question it, Madam; Saint Fal knows how earnestly I promote the interests I have once espoused.

This discourse surprized me. What can possibly have happened, said I to myself, that requires assistance? I hid my perplexity as much as possible; I durst not own my ignorance, lest the duke should enquire the occasion of my tears. I employed a stratagem; beseeching him to relate the affair, as if I had heard nothing of it, that by putting the several accounts together, I might the better judge what was to be done. It is a trifle, said he, and ought not to alarm you; such affairs are frequent here, and a proper turn will set all to rights. It is true, the affair, upon second thoughts, might prove troublesome to any one else, Madam;

but this is not the case, I there will be nothing got by molesting you; for the Marquis of L. V. Saint Fal, and I, are not persons to suffer any thing of that nature. I will lay a wager the count is of the same opinion.

All this served only to increase my uneasiness, and raise my curiosity. Saint Fal, who saw what I would be at, and was an intimate friend of the duke's, pursued my thoughts, and asked him, if he had taken an oath to perplex me, in making me wait so long for the particulars. God forbid! replied the duke, seating himself; but I judged it proper to put the lady in good heart. This is the fact; others may have related it differently; but what I am going to say may be depended on; I have it from the fountain head.

About two hours ago, a woman, much about your age, though not so handsome, followed by a man, sent your name into me just as dinner was over. I had company with me; but imagining it must have been you, Madam, I rose immediately from table to receive you. How was I surprized to find myself mistaken! You are not the only one, said this Countess Des Roches, that have expressed their astonishment at seeing me. Your prejudice in favour of a woman, who, upon what account I know not, has taken my name, makes you wonder that I should dispute that title with her, and complain that she has very gravely given my husband out for dead, whom I have brought to wait on you; and on that consideration, has received some favours from the court. You may imagine, continued the duke, how much I was surprized at this preamble. Good God! said I to the woman, you perplex me very much! I am at a loss what to think of the confidence you shew, in addressing yourself to me under the name of a person for whom I have a great respect, and know perfectly well. Upon this the Count Des Roches spoke, and in a polite manner told me, he did not doubt but the person, for whom I interested myself, was of the same name, and that in the king's armies, there were several more; but what most surprized him was, that though he proved himself, by a personal appearance, to be alive, people would have him to be dead, at least

least till an account could be had from his regiment, to which letters had been sent, as he was informed, in order to discuss the affair: in the mean time, he was given to understand, that his commission was disposed of; and that though what he affirmed should prove true, yet, without great difficulty, things could not be altered. The count added, that he was the more incensed against the person who had played him this trick, for that he came to court in order to solicit a gratification, which he had occasion for, being obliged to drink the waters, but could not now hope to succeed, since such a favour had been granted to another person. He concluded with beseeching me not to take it ill, if he applied himself to the war-office, which he had not as yet done, knowing I interested myself in favour of the fictitious or real Countess Des Roches; offering at the same time to desist, if I had reasons for the adventure's not being talked of; being assured my interest could easily prevent his being a sufferer in the affair.

While the duke was giving this detail, Saint Fal bit his nails, and seemed to be in a deep study. For my part, I was all in amaze, and fancied nobody ever met with such extraordinary adventures except myself. The duke continued his discourse in the following manner.

'You cannot question, Madam,' said he, looking steadfastly on me, 'but his request perplexed me very much. I thought my answer would be of such consequence, that it would be proper to defer it till to-morrow. The officer retired, professing to observe my commands; and I am come, Madam, to know how you would have me behave in the affair. Ridiculous it is, I own; but we shall be obliged to prove at the office, that no fraud has been employed, and that though the gentleman and his wife are of the same name, you are still the person I specified in the memorial presented in your behalf. To put the thing past dispute, all you have to do, is to give in the place where your husband died, that enquiry may be made, and you acknowledged the real widow of the Count Des Roches.'

Saint Fal, who perceived the anxiety into which this discourse plunged me,

and of which, in truth, he was the cause for want of foresight, answered in a bantering tone, which much surprized me, that the affair would be soon cleared up; that this Count and Countess Des Roches were, in all probability, impostors, who designed by their contrivance to pick somebody's pocket, and that in two hours time I could bring sufficient proofs who I was; but at present urgent business, though out of good-breeding I did not tell him as much, obliged me to go out. 'Good God!' cried the duke, interrupting him, 'the lady is much to blame, if she uses the least ceremony with me; she knows I am entirely devoted to her, and should be extremely concerned to lay the least restraint on her: on the contrary, I should think myself very happy if she took the freedom to refuse seeing me, as often as I am unseasonable in my visits.' Adged from what Saint Fal said, that he used this contrivance in order to talk with me alone: upon this I seconded him in a very polite manner, that the duke might not imagine I was at a loss. He came immediately to a resolution, and went away with the count, who set him the example; giving me a wink that he would be with me immediately: in fine, I was left alone; if one may be said to be so with a hundred reflections, one more vexatious than another.

So many crosses, without intermission, overwhelmed me to that degree, that I was quite stupified. Saint Fal returned as my tears began to find a passage. It was high time, being almost choaked. 'I am come, lovely Jenny!' cried the count, 'to shew my grief at your feet, for what my imprudence has occasioned. I never imagined such a use would be made of it, as I find by the duke has been done. Had I known what he was about, when he solicited that unlucky gratification, I should have prevented his good intentions, and foreseen the consequences.' — 'The mischief is done,' answered I, obliging him to rise; 'and you are far less the cause, than that cruel destiny which pursues me! But our time is too precious to be thrown away in this manner. You see there are an hundred reasons to one for my making off. Give me this last mark of your friendship, not to forsake me till I am settled in a monastery.' — 'I am ready to obey you,' replied Saint Fal with a sigh;

a sigh; 'but if you would be ruled by me, (and you ought, considering the perplexity you are in) I will place you so as to be secure from all alarms, or at least have the satisfaction of being your own mistress.' I exclaimed bitterly against this proposal, telling him, that the sad experience I had hitherto had, of being left to myself, prevented my making a second trial, perhaps more fatal than the first.

Saint Fal opposed my resolution but faintly; he remonstrated, however, that till a convent was pitched upon, I must retire somewhere. This I thought reasonable enough, and the more, as he observed to me, that till I took the veil, I should be upon the footing of a pensioner, and that my effects, which he would take care should be brought, would be a credit to me, and procure me a more favourable reception. How great a master was this amiable friend in the art of persuasion! He interested my vanity, and fixed my eye imperceptibly on the advantages a person receives who comes well equipped to a monastery. It is true, these things made no very deep impression; yet they had their effect. Pride will always exert itself: no age nor character is proof against it, and experience teaches us, that through ostentation it will subside in the grave itself.

Our consultation lasted an hour, when it was resolved I should not go away till the next morning; and, in order to deceive La Geneval, whom we had all the reason in the world to mistrust, we agreed Saint Fal should tell her, that being too much straitened for room, I had taken an house that was empty, and should furnish it directly for my reception. We took this precaution, lest in her frequent conferences with the old marquis she should give him some light that would put him upon his guard, in case he dissembled with me. I could not forbear suspecting as much. I could read in his eyes, every time he looked at me, a secret design, which never failed of making me uneasy. To be a woman, and subtle, is much the same. Simplicity is seldom found after twenty: nay, thirteen has produced as artful women as ever thirty did. But no more of that; I may perhaps be mistaken with the rest of the world: where reputation is concerned, too much precaution cannot be employed. If prejudice is

too hasty, equity ought to suspend the sentence, till a rigorous examination be made.

Every thing concerted was put in execution. The furniture was taken down early next morning; but, instead of sending it to the place intimated to La Geneval, one of the count's servants conveyed it to Paris, on carriages hired for that purpose.

About an hour before my departure I sent for Melicourt, and acquainted him with my journey, and the motives which induced me to undertake it, promising to write a direction to him as soon as I was fixed, that he might find me out. He was sensible of my regard, and assured me, that at his return he would not fail to wait on me. He informed me, his affairs were in a fair way, and that before the end of the month he hoped St. Agnes would be released from her vows. I congratulated with him very sincerely on the occasion, and told him, I intended to write to that dear friend as soon as my troubles would permit; begging, that in the mean time he would inform her nobody had a greater value for her than myself.

Secret undertakings are generally attended with disagreeable accidents. I was got into a post-chaise provided by Saint Fal, in order to join him, for he set out first, and was thanking Heaven that I had made my escape without any obstacle; when, turning towards the great alley, I passed close by the old marquis, who was coming in his coach from Paris. I turned pale at the sight of him, being convinced he knew me by his earnest look and a smile. What he discovered in my countenance I knew not. I presently lost sight of him. My chaise went at a great rate, and I flattered myself that my fear was the worst of the adventure.

As short as my journey was, it afforded time for reflection. I began, through custom, to bear much better the continual crosses which beset me, than the marquis's inconstancy. 'He no longer loves me,' cried I to myself, 'he abandons me to my own destiny. Fatal passion! why did I suffer thee to gain so cruel a sway in my breast? Why cannot I tear it from me? I am told I was made for love; why then can I not reward the assiduity of the politest and most complaisant man in

'the world?' Pursuing this thought, self-love made me reflect how happy I should be, if I could bring myself to do justice to the count's merit. I represented him to myself with that easy, generous air, with which the services he did me were accompanied. His agreeable and engaging person was not forgot: I could not but admire his disinterestedness and noble behaviour. A sigh ensued. Methought I endeavoured to persuade myself to do him justice. When I drew a parallel between him and the marquis, the one seemed an ungrateful, the other a tender and constant lover. Such were my thoughts when he appeared at the end of the court, where he waited for me in a livery coach; a precaution he used, to prevent the place to which I was going from being discovered.

I was so taken up with the notions just now mentioned, that I received him with a far different countenance than formerly: my expressions even exceeded what he usually met with from me. His behaviour, instead of making me sensible of my giving a handle to it, plunged me deeper into the illusion, which rose from my troubled mind. I talked of the apartment he had hired for me, as familiarly as if he was my entire confidant. He informed me, that till the furniture for a handsome apartment was fitted up, I must go into an hotel ready furnished, where I should be commodiously situated. I thanked him in the most obliging manner, for the pains he had taken in serving me. Alas! this was cruelty. My carriage served only to renew the wound the caprice of love, rather than my charms, had made in his heart, and which reason perhaps might have healed in time. The spouse, dearer to me than life, excuses this generous pity. Can any one refuse it, to a person whose conduct was so truly deserving?

The count and I supped together: I was very chearful, and he overjoyed to observe so great a change. He afterwards owned, that the apprehension he had of my making a trial of his moderation and sentiments, in order to come to a resolution about the monastery, if he had betrayed any eagerness, alone restrained him twenty times from throwing himself at my feet to express the transports he received from my complaisance. How refined was such an

apprehension! how much it increased my esteem! Few men are so reserved; and that woman is happy, who makes a friendship with such.

The next day Saint Fal conducted me to my apartment, consisting of four rooms. My chamber was so well adorned, and so different from what I had at Versailles, that I scarce knew the furniture again. I could not forbear blaming the count for this additional expence. He excused himself, saying he had not ordered it, but that it was only the remaining part of the furniture, which my lodging at Versailles could not contain. His apologies were always so handsomely turned, whenever I found fault, that I was sometimes vexed at myself when at a loss for a reply. Such is the advantage of wit, and no small share of it is required to prevent the mortification of making acknowledgments: this is to oblige doubly.

Saint Fal passed a part of this day too with me: he busied himself in remarking to me the titles of several new books, with which he had augmented my library, and advised me to read, in order, he said, to divert my thoughts, the better to enable me to judge coolly on what was to be done. He named several much in vogue, and esteemed by all persons of taste. Among several pamphlets, which seemed new, the title of one piece struck me, and engaged my curiosity. I enquired if the history, under the title of the Paysanne Parvenu, was titious or real. 'I cannot say any thing positive as to that,' replied Saint Fal; 'oftentimes the heroes of such adventures never existed but in the author's imagination: nevertheless, as to the book in question, it may be matter of fact, or at least an artful criticism on some one who has made her own fortune. Many such there are, charming Jenny, and among them, some who owe their elevation as much to their virtue as to a capricious turn of events. But, without entering into a detail of too great a length, and too serious a nature at present, I may venture to affirm, the reading of such books is useful, instructing, and proper to form the mind. Besides, being unavoidably interested in reading such amusing passages, truths are frequently met with, which persons would not take the

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trouble to dive into, were they not with art and delicacy thrown in their way. Proper expressions not only please, but lead to an imitation of the virtues proposed as a model; a method of instructing often crowned with success: one may add, that it has sometimes led the way to a morality of the greatest consequence. To correct mankind by amusing them, is certainly the most agreeable means, and which seldom fail: the mind, independent as it is, revolts against the harshness of rigid maxims, and may be compared, lovely Jenny, to the heart which repines when under the constraint of imperious laws; whereas mildness and address are sure to prevail. Happy are they who have attained the art!

Whilst Saint Fal was discoursing thus, I turned over the *Paysanne Parvenu*: when he was silent I read a page, and was charmed with the style, and the singular manner with which the author lays open the deepest recesses of the heart. This agreeable amusement lasted till supper-time; nor should I have then quitted it, had not Barbara informed me how late it was. The count, who was no more tired than myself, took the advantage of my good humour, and asked leave to stay supper, a favour I could not prevail on myself to refuse; not but I knew very well, it was breaking a little into the strict rules of decency. While the cloth was laying, he asked me, if he was so unfortunate as to be troublesome, or whether I had so little confidence in him, as not to talk of what was agreeable to me. I must own the question puzzled me, not imagining the drift of it. The Count was never at a loss in knowing my thoughts. 'You are amiable beyond expression,' said he, seizing my hand in a respectful manner; 'two days I have enjoyed the charms of your conversation, without once mentioning the marquis.' Saying this, the artful Saint Fal looked earnestly at me; endeavouring, methought, to sound my heart, and there discover whether I was really indifferent in regard of the marquis; or, out of resentment only, forbore to speak of him. My colour came; my heart represented the ungrateful man with all his charms, and all his cruelty. 'How barbarous are you!' answered I with

an air of trouble; 'why should you remind me of a man I am desirous, you know, to forget? What pleasure can you find in plunging me again into reflections it has cost so dear to tear from my breast? Why would you have me think on the marquis? Does he still remember me? No, no, dear count,' continued I, with some emotion, 'there is not the least appearance of it: he goes away without seeing me, without giving me the least hopes of his return; he bids me farewell for ever. Ah! it is too plain, I am now as indifferent to him, as ever I was dear. Alas! perhaps at this very instant he offers his addresses to another, and vows an eternal constancy!—That sigh, that *alas!*' cried Saint Fal, interrupting me, to prevent my giving way to grief, 'informs me of what I wanted to know. Yes, Jenny, you are more in love than you imagine. The marquis will be ever dear, and his kinsman wretched. You have pronounced my sentence; I revere it, and before eight days are over, will give you convincing proofs that my passion for you surpasses that of yours for the marquis; which is, in reality, saying a great deal.'

What the count said made a deep impression. 'What proofs so convincing, and in so short a time?' replied I. 'What relation can they have with the marquis?'—'Still more marks of your tender passion,' replied Saint Fal, with a forced smile; 'you would not have been thus curious, had my words regarded only myself. For your punishment,' added he, with an agreeable air, 'I shall not inform you, unless I have your promise not to think of the monastery you was so full of till after my return.'—'How!' cried I; 'will you go and leave me before you have settled me in a convent?'—'How obliging,' replied Saint Fal, with a sigh, 'would that fear be in other circumstances!'—'Ah, count,' continued I, 'how can you delight in humbling me? Can you doubt of the friendship I have for you, which I owe you, and of which you are so worthy? But take not a pleasure in giving me these alarms. What journey do you design? What mystery is this which is not to be cleared up but upon condition? In the name of goodness,

'goodness, keep me no longer in suspense!'—'Well, charming Jenny! I must speak, then,' said Saint Fal, lifting up his eyes. 'My duty calls me to the army, where I ought to have been some days before, but could not prevail on myself to leave you surrounded with vexations and troubles. The mystery is, I shall see the marquis, and in eight days you may possibly hear of him. That is the riddle. I am too well acquainted with my cousin's character, to doubt that, when he knows you are at a distance from the duke, and reflects on the injustice of his own suspicions, he will expire through regret for his behaviour towards you: I dare venture to affirm it. Consider whether such a reflection is agreeable to me, or that upon it I can leave you with a serene mind.'

How great is the force of love in a heart that is prepossessed! No sooner had the count given me hopes of being still beloved, and that the marquis might perhaps return again, my disturbed mind was no sooner struck with the charming illusion, but I imbibed, without measure, the sweetness of such a flattering idea. I was no longer uneasy at his intended departure, which before I seemed to apprehend; my thoughts, outstripping the post, carry Saint Fal in twenty-four hours to the army, bring him and the marquis together, over-hear their discourse, are witnesses of my lover's repentance, and grant his pardon before he sues for it. Supper being served up, very opportunely interrupted a conversation which began to give me pain. Saint Fal, always complaisant, always refinedly polite, pretended not to observe what he too plainly perceived; he entertained me with the pleasure he proposed to himself from my letters, since he had, he said, my leave to write to me, and was in hopes of my answers. He avoided mentioning the marquis: but a moment before, he was blamed for recalling him to my mind; whereas now, if I had spoke my sentiments, I should have quarrelled with him for being so ready to obey me. Cruel love! fatal passion! how dost thou disorder a heart too weak and sensible to resist thy power? That very instant I was indifferent, and had not for two days mentioned my lover, and this without the least constraint,

because I thought him grown indifferent himself. Hope revives me; I believe he still loves me, and on that account would talk continually of him. May not this be truly stiled caprice? Do not the mind and heart contribute their share in these disorders of the judgment? Can any one wonder, after this, that on such a topick, a history containing variety of events has been built? Alas! were journals taken of the errors of the heart and mind, there would be little room in libraries for any other subject: it were to be hoped, they would be finely touched after the manner in which M. De Crebillon has wrought his *Caprices of the Heart and Mind*; nor can it be denied, how odd soever it may seem, that disorder is the offspring of Nature. The manner of improving it must be the work of art and sense, qualities rarely found united.

At last Saint Fal took his leave: notwithstanding his endeavours to conceal his tears, I saw them trickle down; this affected me very much, and engaged me to give him all the marks of friendship possible. He was so well satisfied, that he repeated the strongest assurances of his disinterestedness, and the zeal he had to promote my happiness with the greatest sincerity. He was no sooner gone, but I ordered him to be called back; I exacted of him, that he should not make the least effort in my favour with regard to the marquis. Notwithstanding my tenderness for him, my little heart was nettled; haughty as it was, it could not remember the offence without shewing a resentment. The apprehension I was under lest the count, in order to serve me, should take some steps not agreeable to a vanity well grounded, made me employ a very singular precaution; that I might not be deceived, in case my lover returned, I was determined his passion should be the only motive. With this view I made Saint Fal engage his word of honour, and promise to inform me, with the sincerity of a gentleman, of all that passed in regard of me, without suppressing the least circumstance on any motive whatsoever. His answer to this seemed so sincere, that I did not doubt of his acting according to my wish. I consented on my side to what Saint Fal demanded; which was, not to make any alteration in my way of life till his return. It was with difficulty that

that I agreed to it; I seemed to foresee what was to happen.

The day after the departure of this amiable friend I was terribly dejected. How frightful is solitude after an agreeable companion! It was in vain to have recourse to work or reading; every thing was tedious, and no possibility of amusing myself. Half the day was spent in melancholy and affliction. My only comfort was the expectation of hearing soon from the army; and would willingly, had it been in my power, have abridged the time, the sooner to have that satisfaction. The pleasing hope of my lover's return, with which the count had flattered me, was continually present in my mind. 'What! shall I behold him again tender and constant?' said I to myself as often as the thought occurred. 'Shall I have the happiness of hoping to be his?' One moment I was in hopes, the next I despaired: in a word, I could not agree with myself; and when I seriously put the question, 'What do I think?' I could make no answer. Doubting, perplexed, I walked backwards and forwards, looked through the window, went from one apartment to the other, and suffered more than if I had been employed in the most laborious exercise. Where the mind is oppressed, the body undergoes a great deal.

I supped and went to bed very early, but it was in vain to close my eyes; twice I put out my candle, and lighted it as often. In short, not knowing which way to turn myself, and quite spent, I rose to fetch a book from my library; the first I met with was a pamphlet the count had brought the day he set out, and, as he said, much in vogue. I carried this book to bed: in reading three or four pages, I began to interest myself in favour of the young lady whose story it related. I was much affected: I dreaded coming to an end of what was so agreeable. I made a pause; my fears soon regarded new objects. I lost myself, if I may be allowed the expression, in favour of the lovely Marianne; I thought there was a near resemblance between our adventures. She found a protectress; the character she gives of her exactly suited Madame De G—. Every page fur-

nished matter for applications. I stopped. 'Alas!' said I, 'this is me. This lover, so tender, is the marquis, Climal M. De G—.' How different soever these adventures were from mine, I was so bent upon finding a resemblance, that I strained the events, adjusted the characters, and even the conversations did not escape me.

Thus, agreeably amused, did I pass a part of the night, and continued reading till I had finished the first part. All I had in the world would have been the purchase of the following ones. 'How charming an author *!' cried I to myself; 'how happy should I be in his acquaintance! It is impossible to write with so much wit and delicacy, and not be exceeding amiable in conversation.' From thence I considered the advantages arising from books. I found myself quite altered by the amusement I reaped from so many different passages. I resolved on setting apart a time for reading. 'Life,' said I to myself, 'will pass away more imperceptibly, and with less regret.' Such agreeable relief is more than I could have expected. Sleep, at last, closed these reflections, and I passed the night in a manner which surpassed my expectations.

At ten in the morning I was waked by a woman's voice, which was exquisitely fine, and whose melody and sweetness was so great, that I rose on purpose to hear it the better. I presently discovered that the person who was mistress of so great a treasure, lived in the apartment over mine: the windows were open, and going to my own I could distinguish the words. Enchanted as I was with this amusement, I could not think of dressing, for fear of losing the least part of this regale. I was always extravagantly fond of music, and to this day it is my favourite diversion.

When the singing ceased, I dressed myself, and then gave directions in the house affairs: I was no novice in them, considering my age, and knew something of economy. My aunt, as honest as a servant could be, was yet an entire stranger in Paris. It is true, my experience was short of her's in things of this nature, nevertheless I acquitted myself tolerably well.

Several days passed, and nothing material occurred. I had taken an entire relish for reading, and found so much relief from it, that my whole time in a manner was spent in it. I soon went through all the modern pieces: among the authors, which pleased me most, Messieurs De Crebillon and De Marivaux were chiefly distinguished. Had it been allowable for a young woman to seek acquaintances with men, I should infallibly have endeavoured to draw such agreeable persons to my house. I envied the happiness of those who enjoyed their conversation. Where a book gains our favour, the author commonly comes in for his share: in a word, reading was a refuge, and often a pleasure to me. By way of variety, musick was sometimes indulged. I had made an acquaintance with the young gentlewoman who sung so well, and whose voice at the very first charmed me so much. She was a person of family, about twenty-two, of an infinite deal of wit, and enticing sweetness of temper. She gained my affections from the beginning, and without examining into her conduct, I placed an entire confidence in her.

She dined with me almost daily; and when she missed, it was, as she said, that I might do her the same favour. As to the remaining part of the day, we had neither of us taken it into our head to pass it together. I lived so very retired, that probably she would not venture to propose going abroad; or, rather, she did not think proper to interrupt her now way of life, to which I was an utter stranger, and be grave with me, when she might enjoy so much company; a motive I had not been acquainted with, but for an adventure which befel me soon after, and taught me how imprudent a young woman is who grows familiar with strangers, particularly of her own sex; otherwise I might very innocently have been entangled in some dangerous engagements, without being able to extricate myself from them. What hazards do young women run when abandoned to themselves, and how little do they know of the snares which may be laid for them! Without a large share of discretion, and this supported by the best advice, they seldom escape the ambushes prepared for their ruin. Happily I did not buy this experience too dear; but I have less rea-

son to thank my own discretion, than Heaven, which opened my eyes, and discovered the danger to which I was exposed.

One evening, when the moon shone very bright, I went to the window for the benefit of the air. I began to reflect with great anxiety on my not hearing from the army. Three weeks were passed without any news from the count, though he had promised to write on his arrival. I was racking my imagination, I say, to find out the cause of this neglect, when Mademoiselle Junia, she who sung so well, came into my chamber, and asked me to honour her with my company at supper. 'I am extremely dull to day,' said she, 'and I know nobody but yourself who can divert a melancholy which overwhelms me, without my being able to discover the reason. Can you be so cruel as to leave me in it?' The disposition I was in so much resembled what she described, that I very cheerfully accepted of her proposal. 'We will be a long time at table; we will sing: this perhaps may enliven us both, for you seem as grave as myself. A little disorder should now and then be indulged to keep up our spirits; and, in my opinion,' added she, 'good cheer is of great efficacy for that purpose.' I agreed to what she advanced, and followed her with a kind of satisfaction at being diverted from my uneasiness. This drew a thousand acknowledgments from her in return for my complaisance.

In effect, the meal was sprightly, which is not usual between two women. Junia's sparkling turns of wit made me laugh very heartily: nevertheless, I could not sincerely approve of some expressions she let fall from time to time. As often as this happened, I looked very grave; but she bantered me, mimicked my countenance, and by that means obliged me to quit it, rallying me for my preciseness. 'Are we not alone?' said she; 'nobody hears us; and may we not, as we are friends, and of the same sex, make ourselves amends for the severe restraint in which we are educated, and which decency obliges us to observe?' Mademoiselle Junia was certainly the most artful creature in the world, as will appear by the following contrivance. How much ought the conversation of such a woman to be dreaded! But, to proceed.

As short as our acquaintance was, she

she might very well be convinced that I was virtuous. She never saw any man with me: I lived at my ease, and said little of my own affairs. All she could imagine at most was, that I was a young widow well provided for, and so much concerned for the late loss of a beloved husband, that I avoided company. I was one day at church with her, and it was no unusual thing for me to be stared at. An acquaintance of this gentlewoman's was mightily smitten with me, and to be sure had desired to be introduced. To effect this, she had for some days past often proposed making a set at quadrille in my apartment. My complaisance was a sufficient pretext, and natural enough, but my answer had been so positive on the subject, and I had so plainly told her, that, excepting herself, I would see no company, that she did not dare pursue the project. Her contrivance to work her ends will presently appear. When I reflect on my narrow escape, I tremble to this day. Heaven inspired me, as we shall see.

The artful Junia, who aimed to make me very gay, plied me frequently with a small muscadine wine, which pleased me exceedingly. Notwithstanding my natural temperance, I could not refrain from this bewitching liquor. By degrees I grew very chearful, and at last went so far as a song, which I had never done in her company before. Junia was so taken with the sweetness of my voice, or dissembled it so well, that I was easily persuaded I deserved the praises she bestowed on me. 'Really,' said she, 'a person loses a great deal that is a stranger to so charming a creature; and you are certainly in the right to shun men's company, since you have so little relish for them: otherwise, with so much beauty and so fine a voice, you would never be free from them; they would pursue you every where, and weary you with their continual importunities.'

I answered her gallantry, and was not behind-hand with her in compliments. 'Well, then,' said she, striking her forehead, 'we will divert ourselves royally. Do you know I am a little maddish, and my delight is to appear different from what I am? I love to act the man, and do it better than any one. Ask my woman, (who was standing by.) I will make love to you. I!' continued she; 'and I will lay a

'wager you do not know me in my disguise.' I could not forbear laughing at this new humour, and assured her, that whatever shape she appeared in, she would always be agreeable to me. 'We will try that,' said she. Just as she was speaking, somebody knocked at the door. 'Eh, good God!' cried she, 'who is this come to interrupt us? Go, see!' continued she to her chambermaid; 'I am not at home to any body but my friend Saint Clare: her I will admit of; she is as mad as myself; but as for any other, mum.'

This order made me easy. I was apprehensive of company; for, besides that I had was all undressed, I laid it down as a rule to see nobody. What Junia pretended to guess came to pass; it was the friend she mentioned: she was very agreeable, and we soon became acquainted. 'Thou art come very seasonably,' said Junia; 'thou wilt partake of the comedy I am going to act, and shalt judge as well as the fair widow.' The gentlewoman enquired very gravely what we were going to do; and being informed: 'You cannot imagine,' said she to me very joyfully, 'how diverting she is in men's cloaths: no, her humour is beyond expression. About six months ago, she was thus disguised in the country, made love for three days to a very pretty woman, and managed her addresses so well, as to make a conquest. The unravelling of the plot was excellent. The country gentlewoman was so disappointed at the metamorphosis, that she took to her bed. She had always protested against matrimony, but this mad creature gave her such a hankering after it, that she very fairly took unto her.' This story made me laugh heartily, and inclined me to judge by myself if she acted her part so well as they pretended. I did not wait long, the gentleman soon made his appearance.

He began with an easy air, throwing himself sometimes at my feet, sometimes at the stranger's. He wore a very handsome mask: a precaution I imagined Junia had taken to make the scene appear more natural. The confidence I had in the disguise prevented my suspecting any foul play: besides Saint Clare confirmed me by her example in my security. When I put the mask away in a serious manner, he pretended to resent it, and revenge himself

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by preferring Saint Clare to me. All this appeared so natural, that I was imposed on for near an hour. But at last I began to mistrust something, when, under pretence of addressing himself to the treacherous Saint Clare, I could hear him say very distinctly, 'She is a lovely creature; but contrive some means of putting an end to the comedy. I can hold out no longer; nor do I see to what purpose.'

This surprized me prodigiously, and made me colour. I found out the contrivance, but was so much mistress of myself, as not to betray my suspicions. I played cunning on my side, and rose with an intention to slip away, but was prevented. However, on alledging a necessity for withdrawing, (and I spoke out as if I mistrusted nothing, to give no suspicion) the chambermaid conducted me into a back room: there was a private door opened from thence upon the stairs, which I knew, and immediately made my escape with the utmost precipitancy, thanking Heaven, as I ran, for my preservation, with a firm resolution to make no more acquaintances of my own head, and to break off all correspondence with so dangerous a friend.

I was scarce got down, but I was pursued. Barbara, whom I prompted, said I was going to bed, and had forbid her to let in any one. Junia at the door used all endeavours to have it opened, but I was not to be prevailed on; and she returned heartily mortified, I believe, to be the dupe of her own plot.

Nevertheless, instead of going to bed, I watched at the key-hole, to be ascertained of what I suspected: my belief was, that Junia had substituted a man in her place, doubtless to give him an opportunity of being acquainted. I was not mistaken; I discerned by the light of a flambeau, which a servant carried, the cloaths of him who acted the supposed part. He seemed young and handsome, and was leading Saint Clare, who to be sure was in the secret, for they stopped opposite to my door; and, by what I heard, I had reason to think the gentleman was much taken with me. This made me resolve to be very circumspect for the future against such adventures. However, this was not the last.

The next day Junia came to see me, but could not get admittance, and might

plainly see I was apprized of her intended project. She wrote to me; her letter was returned unopened. She talked with my aunt, and told her to inform me, that she was much surprized I should quarrel with her on account of a harmless frolick. All this was lost labour, and I was so resolute in my conduct, that at last she thought fit not to molest me any longer.

But the spark who had taken so much pains would not desist; the more difficulty, the more ardent the lover, as it usually happens. He wrote letters, came to the door in twenty different disguises, without any success. I was always on my guard in person, mistrusting Barbara's simplicity, and therefore it was no easy matter to surprize me.

Being at work one day in my chamber, there was thrown in, doubtless from Junia's window, a packet sealed up, which being very heavy, fell with some noise; I took it up, and found it directed for me. Besides a letter inclosed, as I imagined, there was certainly a large sum in gold. I blushed, and knew not how to behave. What could I do? To carry it back myself to Junia, was what they aimed at. If I sent it by my aunt, they might either pretend I kept it, or take an opportunity some days after to demand it, and under that pretext force a visit upon me, which I endeavoured so much to avoid.

I spent above an hour thinking on a thousand different things, and at last came to a resolution. I sent Barbara to the parish church with a letter to a discreet curate, whose probity was universally known. I begged the favour of seeing him immediately on an affair of the last consequence. I did not in the least doubt of his speedy compliance.

My aunt's back was scarce turned, when I began to reflect on what I had done. I had always heard it laid down as a maxim, that prudent persons ought never to give men of a certain cloth a handle to meddle in their affairs, there being often reason to repent it afterwards. It was natural to enquire who I was; my youth, and the charms I was flattered with, might occasion questions and enquiries. And what answer could I make? In owning the truth, I might draw upon myself exhortations and remonstrances. Besides, could I depend on being believed, and the alleviations

variations of my virtuous disposition admitted? If I acknowledged who I was, I must expect no very favourable interpretations to be passed on my easy circumstances, and a superior authority employed to oblige me to return to my parents. This thought terrified me; I resolved to be very reserved, and to behave in such a manner with regard to the clergyman I expected, as to give him no hold. I reckoned much on the good character I had reason to expect, if my way of life should be enquired into, knowing I could not be taxed with any thing from the time I came into the house. Nobody knew any thing of me, which is no small advantage to a young woman, whose reputation is in it's greatest lustre when it furnishes nothing for conversation.

The clergyman followed my aunt. As soon as he came, I informed him of the difficulty I was in, and the occasion of it. His behaviour was such as gave me great satisfaction. He heard what I said, and did not seem inquisitive after more than I was inclined to acquaint him with. This gained my confidence, esteem, and respect. He commended my conduct very much, and assured me I had nothing to fear from their attempts. He exhorted me to avoid seeing any company that I could not depend on, and lamented the dangers those were exposed to who acted otherwise: the ruin of many, as he assured me, was owing entirely to it. Without trespassing on charity, he said, the person's character who lived in the apartment above me, was suspected, and consequently that I ought to break off all commerce with her.

This discreet clergyman carried away the sealed packet, and left me much edified with his behaviour. What methods he took I know not, but I never heard any more of Junia or her companions.

I thought myself very happy in having employed so efficacious a remedy, and returned Heaven my thanks for it's success.

The following day was an era of new crosses: I received two letters, one from the army, the other from Versailles.

Notwithstanding my earnestness to hear some tidings of the inconstant marquis, curiosity prevailed on me to open the second. In reality, it was very extraordinary to receive a letter from those

parts: besides that I had no correspondence with any one there, nobody knew how to direct to me, excepting Melicourt, and I knew him too well to doubt his discretion; and yet it was wrote at length. This surprized me, and I resolved to clear up the mystery. But how was I struck, to find it came from the old marquis! It was as follows.

IN vain do you fly me, charming Jenny! Wherever you hide yourself, or whatever quality you pass under, I shall always know where you are, and what you are about. I easily guess how much this will alarm you, and the reflections which will arise from an accident so unexpected. But make yourself easy; I am more in your interest than you imagine, and am so far from turning my knowledge to your prejudice, that I am resolved to be the first in fixing your happiness. Remember, a man of my character is an enemy to deceit, and cannot be worse than his word; consequently, beware of taking any steps which fear may suggest. To-morrow I shall be at Paris. I shall wait on you; and it will be your own fault, if you do not receive convincing proofs of the value I set on your virtue. I am no stranger to it, which is no small matter. One trial more, and you will know how much I value you.

THE MARQUIS OF L. V.

The reading of this letter threw me into a fit of trembling, dubious as I was what to do, and pierced to my very soul. 'Heavens!' cried I, 'have pity on me, and assist me! What means this sudden alteration? What can be the old marquis's design? How can he contribute to make me happy? Alas! I am certainly betrayed by his son; who, to get rid of me at once, sacrifices me to his father! It is certainly so! The parent, satisfied with this, lays aside his hatred, and either through generosity or policy will settle me in such a manner as may prevent any accident, in case his son should happen to relent. But how cruel is such a conduct!' continued I, in tears. 'Could I ever have expected so much barbarity from a lover?

lover? How could he foresee that his father's threats and aversion would give place to generosity?

I was so taken up with these reflections, that I forgot Saint Fal's letter, which had been so long expected and so earnestly desired. At last I opened it. A fresh subject of astonishment and tears!

I Have deferred writing from day to day, lovely Jenny! in hopes of sending you something material. The apprehension of making you uneasy, by too long a delay, prevails on me to write, though I have nothing but disagreeable news to send. I promised to hide nothing from you; otherwise would not acquaint you, that I did not meet with the marquis when I arrived at the camp, and that he is not as yet returned from an expedition, on which, at his own request, he was sent. This gives great uneasiness to all his friends, lest he should be taken prisoner. His servants, whom I have questioned, as well as several officers, assure me he came hither very melancholy, though he strove in vain to hide it. It is supposed he is chagrined, and that in order to divert his uneasiness, he procured this command. I was not at a loss to guess his affliction. You cannot be sensible, Mademoiselle, of the great part you bear in it. Be not, however, too much concerned; we may have some account of this dear relation. I shall not fail to communicate it to you instantly. It is generally thought the campaign will be but short; and that after a battle, which is continually looked for and much desired, we shall be sent into quarters. I please myself with the notion, since it will bring me nearer to you: and I think there cannot be a greater pleasure than to see you, nor merit than to deserve your esteem.

From the camp. SAINT FAL.

Our attachment to a beloved object never exerts itself with greater force than when we are on the point of losing it. My notion of war was certainly very imperfect; yet, no sooner did I know that the marquis's life was in danger, but my imagination represented it with all its horrors, 'O Heavens!'

cried I, all in tears, 'why am I thus overwhelmed on all sides at once? How am I to survive it? What can so many afflictions, one upon another, portend? Do they not presage the greatest of misfortunes? But I am prepared to undergo every thing, provided my lover be safe, and escape the dangers to which his courage and chagrin expose him. How unfortunate was I, not to justify myself before his departure! Perhaps my innocence might have restored him to me, and made him careful of a life he ought to preserve for my sake!'

I shall not relate all the expostulations my grief furnished on this occasion. Why should I tire you, O reader, with the recital of my tears? Hitherto, they have been but too plentiful. A little patience; the time will come, when they will be wiped away, and this truth demonstrated, that the happiness which virtue procures for us can never be too dearly bought.

Although I had time to prepare for the old marquis's visit, I found myself terribly confounded when he appeared. His presence made me sensible of the great distance between us, knowing he was now acquainted with my origin. Can pride receive a greater check? However, I took upon me so far as to conquer my blushes and confusion. I resolved to be the first in mentioning the meanness of my birth, in order to prevent him: this expedient I owe to my vanity. 'Is it possible, my lord,' said I, receiving him with great respect, and presenting him a chair, 'that you should condescend to see me, after the discovery you have made? What comparison is there between a country girl, one who has been so unhappy as to fall under your displeasure, and a nobleman of your rank? Whence comes such a distinction, which I have no ways deserved?'—'Let us have no more of that, lovely Jenny,' said the marquis, making me sit down: 'I have no longer the reason of complaint I had formerly against you; and that virtue, of which I have received convincing proofs, has created a due regard for one who is so worthy of it. We will say nothing of your birth: not but I was mightily taken with your candid acknowledgment; a stroke that does not want its force, nor escape my observation. A mean birth

is the capricious effect of chance, never to be called in mind but when vice deforms it; whereas prudence, and noble actions, strip it of all that is contemptible, and cast a lustre upon it, not inferior to that of kings, when no false step is made in the thorny paths of virtue. I shall say no more on this head; you having, my dear girl, less need of instruction than others, as your education has been very extraordinary. What I have to say is of a different nature; but, before I explain myself any farther, I desire you will tell me, with that candour so becoming virtue and honour, upon what terms you are with my son? I have reasons for asking this question; and if your answer proves satisfactory, it will lay an obligation on me, and you shall never repent having explained yourself on a subject I have more at heart than you imagine. Truth, and a thorough confidence in me, carry a greater weight in my judgment than any other qualifications.

When the old marquis wrote his intention of making me a visit, I expected to suffer very much from the conversation; but I little thought it would turn on such an important subject. I was the more terrified, being attacked in the most sensible part. All evasions appeared useless; I had one of the subtlest of men to deal with, whose penetration was surprizing. While he spoke what I have mentioned, his eyes were fixed upon me, and he seemed to search within me the secret recesses of my heart. How could I withstand so terrifying an assault? There was nothing left, but to act with the sincerity he pretended to value so much, if I proposed to succeed with one of his turn, and that method I took. One never falters in speaking the truth.

‘It would be in vain, my lord,’ answered I after a moment’s pause, ‘to deny that your son has been dear to me; he is master of such endearing qualities, and which bespeak so much probity, that my heart could not possibly resist so large a share of merit. I should be wanting to that sincerity, of which you appear so jealous, if I dissimulated on this occasion. I might employ the word esteem instead of love; but I will not impose upon you. I did love your son, with all the sin-

cerity I am capable of; and had not his late behaviour interfered, I might still preserve the same regards: I dare not say they are no more; I am not sufficiently acquainted with myself, to know perfectly my secret sentiments. It is to no purpose for me to dwell any longer on this subject, as I can add nothing more to what I have said. Your experience may perhaps make greater discoveries.’

The old marquis seemed transported at my sincere manner of expressing myself. ‘You are exceeding charming,’ said he, ‘and my esteem for you redoubles; of which I will give you convincing proofs. On your side, continue to speak the truth. Tell me first what your designs are; and then, with the same sincerity, own from whom you receive wherewithal to furnish your expences. Whilst my son and Saint Fal were here, I easily believe you wanted for nothing; but, suppose you never hear more of either of them, how will you contrive to go on as you have begun? Look upon me, adorable creature, as your friend. Banish that fear and trouble I see in you; there is no occasion for them. Did I not truly interest myself in your behalf, I should not enquire into these particulars.’—‘Alas, my Lord!’ replied I with a sigh, ‘you remind me of the imprudence of my conduct; for which my reason has often reproached me. It was with some difficulty your nephew prevailed on me to accept of the tokens, by which his generosity shewed itself in my regard. Some time ago I resolved to spend my days in a monastery; and more than once I have pressed him to crown the work, by assisting me in the execution of that design.’—‘You always talk of Saint Fal, whom you do not love,’ cried the marquis, sily interrupting me, ‘and never once mention my son in all this provision; yet it is more natural to attribute your little revenue to him, than to my nephew. The advantage of being beloved by him—’ ‘My lord, I tell you the truth,’ replied I, interrupting in my turn; ‘I will not abolutely say, that the marquis has no share in what has been done for me: but this I am positive in, that what I have received hitherto, has been from your nephew’s hands; and under

‘under what title would you imagine? As so much lent, for so he generously called it, to be repaid if ever fortune should put it in my power. A train of events, continually alarming me, have thus far prevented my coming to some resolution—’ ‘Good God! my dear girl,’ cried the marquis, ‘I do not pretend to put you upon justifying yourself; you owe me no such deference: your conduct is without reproach, as I have been well satisfied a great while; and so far from wishing you were shut up in a monastery, I would be the first to oppose it. Excuse, lovely Jenny, the perplexing questions I put to you; it is in order to fix upon something in your regard, and to justify that esteem I conceived for you the first moment we were acquainted. This candour, this sincerity, which I have now experienced, convince me that your sentiments place you in a rank not inferior to women of the best quality. I beg I may be favoured with your friendship, and have your leave to cultivate it. I have great designs in your behalf; give me but time to bring them to perfection: in the mean while, go on as you have begun. I come often to Paris, sometimes spend whole weeks there, and then shall be a constant visitor. Be easy as to the time to come; care will be taken. I am obliged to leave you at present; but in two days you may depend on hearing from me.’ Saying these words, which surprized me extremely, the old marquis rose, was very complaisant on the subject of my shape and charms; adding, he often thought of my fine neck; that he intended to invite me to dinner, to have the pleasure of hearing me sing again. After a great deal more of the like nature, he left me, much astonished at what had passed.

In effect, what could I divine? Was it natural to think, that the very man who had expressed himself against me with so much bitterness, was so suddenly changed? Had he not endeavoured to secure me in a convent for life? Was I not still the same Jenny, that little country girl, who had engaged the son in vexatious affairs, and obliged the father to employ his utmost interest? and since that, had I not imposed upon him under a feigned name? Whence;

therefore, should come such a sudden alteration? Could my charms extend their empire over the father as well as the son? If this piece of vanity might be indulged, had I not greater reason to dread this nobleman than ever? It could not be imputed as a crime if I shunned him heretofore, and avoided falling into his hands. Self-preservation is always natural; but should I not be justly condemned, if I accepted of a reconciliation, which doubtless was offered with some view, perhaps incompatible with reputation and virtue? Cruel alternative! How was I perplexed!

The day was spent with weighing these things in my mind; yet, notwithstanding my apprehensions, a blind confidence carried it in favour of this nobleman. ‘Why should he deceive me,’ said I to myself; ‘and if his views are criminal, why would he extol my virtue and conduct? Ought I not rather to imagine it is owing to them that I have gained his esteem? And since he praises me so much on that account, is it not to encourage me to continue? He mentions a happy settlement, and throws out obscure hints; how do I know but he has his reasons for it? To be sure he has,’ said I, confirming myself in the notion; ‘time will effect it. If my conjectures are groundless, Heaven, which has hitherto protected me, and to which I will ever have recourse, will not abandon me.’ Thus did I come to a resolution.

My thoughts now more at liberty, I was going to answer Saint Fal’s letter, when the bell rung. I listened to hear who my aunt talked to. A voice, which struck me to the very soul, made me look through the key-hole. Heavens! what a condition was I in! I immediately knew my father and mother embracing my aunt. At first, I was running to throw myself into their arms; but in endeavouring it, I was so much transported, that finding my feet fail me, and fearing I should fall on the floor, I threw myself into a great chair, where I was an hour without coming to myself. I will now account for this unexpected visit, and shew how much chance interferes in the occurrences of life.

It was lucky for me that my affection towards those who had given me

life occasioned the emotion mentioned in the preceding page; otherwise I should have imprudently discovered myself, and it was not yet time. What was employed in recovering me from my disorder, made me foresee the consequence of what I was upon the point of doing. Doubtless, in acknowledging my parents, I should lay myself under an obligation, either of keeping them with me, or following them home to our cottage; either of which would be equally perplexing to them and myself: I think it needless to give the reasons, they may be easily imagined. I behaved with such complaisance to my aunt in every thing, excepting this particular, as made her life so easy; and my regard for her was so great, that I seemed more to belong to her than she to me: the secret comfort of an unquestionable witness of my conduct, and who was one day to appear in my behalf. If my intentions had been bad, I should have been very careful how I fitted myself with such a cap; but I wanted her only for form's sake, thank God! Heaven preserved in my heart the love of virtue, with which I had been born; and I prayed every day with fervour, for grace to persist in these good intentions. Such prayers are acceptable to God, and he seldom refuses to hear them.

When I was perfectly recovered, I desired extremely to see my father and mother. I was very sure they would not know me, time had made such an alteration in my features and behaviour. I was so much grown, and my dress was so different from what they had seen, that I was easy upon that head. With this assurance I rung my bell: it was dinner time, and I very naturally called for it. My good aunt coming into the room, seemed perplexed. Notwithstanding the familiarity I used her with, I had infused, I do not know why, a reserve, not to say more, which often gave me pain. I asked her what was the matter. She hesitated. Encouraging her, 'Have you broke any thing?' feigned I. 'Well, there is no great harm done.' One familiar question always sufficed to put her in heart; accordingly she owned, she apprehended my anger, because she had wrote to her brother and sister to come and see her at their convenience; and

as she had not acquainted me with it, she was afraid to tell me, that having business at Paris, they took this opportunity, and were actually in the house; that I ought however to pardon her, because she had only sent for them, to let them know the happiness she enjoyed in my service. 'I am glad,' answered I, 'that you are content, and like your place; I wish your happiness was still greater: and far from taking it ill that your relations are come, I am pleased at it; I must see them, and desire they would dine with me.'—'Ah, Madam! you are too good,' cried Barbara; 'it is not for such as they to be so much honoured.'—'Do as you are bid,' replied I; 'bring them to me, I will talk with them: they shall know what you said of me is true.' Barbara was so pleased with this, that she flew to acquaint my parents. My heart was in an agitation, though an agreeable one; nor was it without difficulty that I suppressed its motions, seeing those to whom I owed my life. I suffered from the respect with which they approached me: I even blamed myself, and I did what I could to put an end to it.

At last, by dint of caresses, I prevailed with them to sit, and grow a little more familiar. The art which I have often experienced of giving our inferiors a freedom and confidence in speaking, is to put ourselves on a level with them, and to descend to their rank. Although this was far from being my case, at present I was obliged to observe the maxim with my father and mother. The prejudice of my superiority made them silent, and it had been impossible otherwise for me to get out of them what I had a mind to know. I made them possess themselves by talking of their village. I pretended to have passed some months at a lady's house to whom it belonged: it was the only method of bringing them to discourse, and it succeeded. My mother, on hearing this, appeared like a person who is recollecting somebody; and told me, it must be at Madame La Comtesse De —, where she had seen me; that I had set her right, and that ever since she had been in the room, she had been revolving in her mind where she had the honour to see me, so much did my face strike her. My father said

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the same thing, and informed me how their village had changed masters since the young lady's marriage, whose father died of an apoplexy. I asked what was become of his wife; he answered me, she lived with her daughter, called Madame D'Estival. Said I, 'Is she ill-humoured as ever?' On my saying this, my father looked at my mother with a smile, as much as to say, 'The lady knows her!' He told me he plainly saw I knew how matters went: that there never was in the world a worse-natured woman than her, we talked off; that she had quarrelled twice with her husband; the third time she carried things to such a length, that he parted from her; that, unfortunately for him, he had put so much in her power, that this separation left him in ill circumstances, but he chose to lose all, rather than pass his days with so worthless a woman. He said, likewise, she lived a league from Paris, whither she always came to spend the winter, and that every body, even her own servants, held her in detestation.'

I had but too much reason to complain of this woman, not to be curious concerning what regarded her. In vain we flatter ourselves that we forgive, the interior always retains an acrimony against those who have offended us; and let us boast ever so much of our heroism, we cannot help feeling a joy, when we hear some disagreeable adventure has happened to an enemy. What my father had said relating to Madame D'Estival, of whom I have often spoke under the name of Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, and whom I shall mention again in the end of these Memoirs, made me blush a little; and bringing to my remembrance all the uneasiness she had given me, I was not sorry to hear the ill laid to her charge; by this means I thought myself revenged of this bad woman. It was, no doubt, this motive that engaged me to ask my father to give me the history of her marriage, and inform me of all that had come to his knowledge on that subject. He would not be asked twice: in spite of his rustick delivery, I did not lose a tittle of it, and though something coarse, still the picture bore a great likeness. I have such a pleasure in an opportunity of letting the haughty Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, at present Madame D'Estival, know I have not forgot all the vexa-

tions she brought upon me, that I even snatch at it. Here is her history! she will infallibly know herself again; and if she has one grain of equity left, she will be obliged to own, that though I know how to take my revenge, I have done it with moderation in her regard.

Of all the lovers who had been attracted, either by the charms or riches of Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, there remained but one; her haughty behaviour, oftentimes heightened into insolence, had drove away the rest. Can one imagine her malice to have been so great, as to set her admirers often together by the ears? She found a pleasure, worthy only of herself, in exasperating them with carrying stories, and even in bringing them to the last extremities: above ten duels were placed to her account, during her father's life, which drew upon her his severest treatment; but to no effect. She had a bad heart; nothing was capable of making it better. As long as M. Le Conte de N—— lived, she kept within bounds, because she feared him: his eyes were no sooner closed, but she gave a loose to her wicked disposition, as will appear from what follows. The faithful lover, whom I have just now mentioned, was named Monsieur D'Estival: he was a gentleman about forty; his fortune moderate, which he sought to improve by marrying. Mademoiselle D'Elbieux was rich, a proper match, and the more so by her brother's retiring into a convent, as is said elsewhere. This gentleman's estate lay four leagues from the castle of the Counts of N——; the neighbourhood had facilitated his acquaintance with the mother and daughter, and flattered him with hopes of succeeding one day or other in his pursuits. It must be observed, that this young lady had an air of sweetness which captivated at first sight. Monsieur D'Estival, who was handsome and well-shaped, had been so well received by her, that he thought himself too soon sure of the happiness to which he aspired. How moderate ought the judgment to be in such cases! Nothing is so deceitful as the countenance! But of this hereafter; let us return to the story.

Mademoiselle D'Elbieux took no notice of any but this new lover, and despised all the rest for some days.

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Him we speak of, excelled his competitors by an air of nobleness and grandeur which was natural to him: add to this, that he was of an easy complying temper; and, in order to please her, condescended to be a slave to her capriciousness. Monsieur D'Estival was bent on marrying her, interest made him surmount every thing; to make his fortune, it was necessary to supplant his competitors; and there was nothing he did not undergo to succeed.

In the portrait I gave of Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, as before mentioned, I said she had wit; and it was true. She soon found out the views of her new lover, and without examining whether she was in the right, she resolved to gratify her natural malignity. The better to secure him, great regard was shewn; and as soon as she thought him smitten, and that love and interest were united, she threw off the mask, and resigned herself entirely up to her caprice and humour: always restless and mischievous, she could not bear to dissemble long.

The Countess of M——, her mother, loved the world, as I have said elsewhere; and though somewhat in years, was amorously inclined. M. D'Estival, without any other design but that of rendering her favourable to his desires, had not been backward in making his court to her in his first visits; and, finding things went well by the gracious manner he was received, he continued to render himself agreeable, in which he had very good success. Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, who soon perceived her mother's growing passion, took a malignant joy in augmenting it, and throwing M. D'Estival into the most ticklish perplexity. 'There is but one way of obliging my mother to be favourable to you,' said she to him one day in the garden: 'she has hitherto rejected all the offers that have been made, because not one of those who have done me the honour to address me, could find out my dear mother's foible. Continue to make your court to her; let her imagine, if you please, that you give her the preference; if you are lucky enough to make her believe so, no doubt but I shall soon be yours. Was not this enough to redouble the ardour of M. D'Estival? Nothing could be greater than it was, and every body believed him in love with the mother. The Countess De N——

was mistaken among the rest; self-love was easily flattered, her heart was struck, gratitude pressed it: she had been formerly compassionate; now-a-days we are less severe upon the article of decency. After some struggle, she resolved to own to her lover, he was not indifferent. Mademoiselle D'Elbieux perceived, by her mother's pensiveness, what passed in her breast. She was frequently treated with severity, because she deserved it; now she had it in her power to be revenged, without trespassing on respect, she snatched the opportunity with great eagerness.

M. D'Estival had been well received till now; his situation changed. Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, from mild and obliging, behaved to him with coldness and severity. He was astonished at it, and used the most pressing means of regaining her. 'In what is it I have displeased you?' said he to her one night sitting by her, when other people were playing at quadrille. 'You have avoided me for these eight days past; scarce do I appear, but your amiable countenance is clouded. Could I be so unhappy as to have unknowingly drawn upon myself this treatment?' — 'Let us have no more words upon this subject, if you please,' answered the dear Mademoiselle D'Elbieux: 'you would find it a hard matter to justify yourself; I am none of those fools; and if I appear otherwise than formerly, you may be assured I have good motives for so doing; nay, they are undeniable. I own I had an esteem for you; but you have given me reason to alter my sentiments; let us talk no more of it. You have had your views, I wish they may succeed. I am surprized, however, you take the pains to question me, having a more agreeable employment upon your hands, and which well deserves all your pains.' Saying this, she rose, and left M. D'Estival astonished at a discourse to which he could not imagine how he had given occasion.

So little did he suspect from whence such an oddity could arise, that he drew near the table where they were at play, and whispered the Countess De N——. Her daughter, piqued at this behaviour, and sitting near her mother after she had quitted M. D'Estival, rose hastily up, and answered very scornfully a civility her lover shewed her as she passed

by. This extraordinary treatment made an impression, and he resolved to know the reason of it as soon as possible.

Hitherto M. D'Estival had acted only upon a view of interest. Mademoiselle D'Elbieux's fickleness made him look upon things in another light: love, which he had hitherto treated as folly, and to which he had not yet been a slave, punished his indifference, and made him sensible of his misfortune in losing the good graces of so charming a person as Mademoiselle D'Elbieux. Jealousy, the constant companion of a growing passion, insinuated itself into his disturbed mind, and made him recollect that his mistress distinguished a certain M. D'Estourneaux, a great hunter, who could discourse of nothing but hounds and horses, unless it were to ridicule, asperse, or murder his neighbour's good name. On such occasions he shone, and these fine accomplishments made him be considered by Mademoiselle D'Elbieux; besides, he was a gentleman of no conduct, and thought to be privately married to a girl very much beneath him.

M. D'Estival, after some jealous reflections concerning D'Estourneaux, concluded he was the cause of the alteration in Mademoiselle D'Elbieux; this thought gave him pain: he resolved to watch his rival; and he thought he had great reason to imagine himself not mistaken, and that he was sacrificed to this new-comer. He was no sooner convinced of this fatal truth, but he became extremely jealous, and that so openly, that every body perceived it. Mademoiselle D'Elbieux was one of the first who found it out. She triumphed in it, and did all she could to carry it to the greatest excess, by overwhelming D'Estourneaux with a distinguishing politeness.

As to the Countess De N——, she behaved quite otherwise: she had, as I have said before, given way to the supposed addresses of M. D'Estival; but seeing them cease on a sudden, and her lover melancholy and uneasy, she could not tell what to think of such a coolness and alteration of temper. 'What is the matter with you?' said she one day to him, when he appeared more thoughtful than ordinary: 'are you sick, or going to be so? I scarce know you. Formerly you was gay, polite, and entertaining; one could not live with you, and not be en-

chanted with your temper: now you are dull, silent, ill-humoured; one does not know who you are angry with. I flattered myself with being your confidante; yet for these eight days you have been out of humour, and I cannot find out the reason. This whimsical proceeding of yours surprises me; and if I was less your friend, I should know how to be revenged, and should make myself easy.'

M. D'Estival, whose trouble was renewed by this discourse, forgot the part he had undertook, and fetched a sigh. 'That's well,' said the countess smiling; 'we shall soon know what puts you out of temper: this sigh is a preliminary of your confidence in me. Take courage, my poor D'Estival; pry'thee, let us have no mystery, and I promise to use my endeavours to make your troubles cease. Ah, Madam!' replied the jealous lover, 'my troubles are not of a nature to be easily remedied; I am jealous, and you easily comprehend—' 'Jealous!' cried the countess very seriously; 'of whom?' 'Good God! do you see any body here who can give you the least uneasiness? Is any favoured but yourself?'—'Yes, no doubt, Madam,' replied D'Estival; 'has not D'Estourneaux the preference? Alas! I perceive it but too well; and since you must know it, that it is which puts me in the condition for which you reproach me.'

This confession threw the countess into the greatest surprize; she could not remember to have ever so behaved to D'Estourneaux, as to give D'Estival room to think she gave the other the preference. To this end she did all she could to disabuse him. D'Estival went upon too sure ground, as he thought, to yield to all these protestations. 'Well!' said the countess to him with some impatience, 'I know an infallible way of convincing you of your error; and lest you should still entertain any doubt on this subject, I will this instant forbid your rival my house: he shall never set his foot within my doors again, and you shall be for ever delivered from his presence.' D'Estival was so sensibly affected by this condescension, that he threw himself at the countess's feet, and assured her, that for this mark of her goodness there was nothing in this world he was not ready to under-
take

take to convince her of his gratitude. As he pronounced these words, touched with the singular favour she had shewn him, he seized one of her hands, and kissed it a hundred times. Mademoiselle D'Elbieux came in as he was in the midst of these transports, and turned pale with anger at so decisive a piece of intelligence, and which proved effectually that D'Estival had deceived her, when he vowed to love nobody but her. On the other hand, the mother, piqued that her daughter should find a man at her feet, bid her very sharply retire, and that she thought her very bold in endeavouring to surprize her. Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, ever haughty, answered, running hastily back, that she had no design of being witness to such an affair, and that when persons were in such a situation, they ought to provide against being surprized. The countess, provoked at the answer, ran to chastise her. D'Estival, perceiving her design, interposed, and exerted himself in appeasing her. This was no hard matter, being now at the bottom of the affair she had endeavoured to unravel, and of which we shall give a farther account, after a word or two concerning Mademoiselle D'Elbieux. She retired to her chamber, extremely nettled at the rebuff she had received. The worst construction, according to her custom, was put upon what she had seen. She concluded D'Estival imposed upon her; that he really loved her mother, and was beloved again; and that there was a very good understanding betwixt them: this thought made her cry for vexation, and inspired a cruel resentment. She revolved in her mind the means of revenging herself; her wicked disposition suggested to her, that she ought to dissemble, and endeavour to recal D'Estival, in order to have it in her power to punish them both for deceiving her. She had too good an opinion of herself, to doubt of success: she consulted her glass by way of prelude, put on some agreeable airs, exercised her eyes, and then went to the room where the company generally met, expecting D'Estival would be there before dinner, according to custom.

As to the countess, she soon saw through D'Estival's discourse; she found his jealousy had discovered him, and that her daughter was the divinity to whom he sacrificed. A word that drop-

ped from D'Estival let her into the secret, and convinced her she was made a property; but upon reflection she was perplexed. Why should he pretend to love her? Her daughter was not under any such restraint, as to be obliged to have recourse to such stratagems. This she was desirous to unravel on the spot, and resolved to dissemble, the better to effect her design. M. D'Estival, surprized at the countess's remaining silent for some moments, whilst she made these reflections, asked very respectfully what was the matter, and whether he had been so unfortunate as to incur her displeasure. 'No, Sir,' answered she, 'I respect and value you very much, but I have a scheme in my head; I shall require a sacrifice at your hands. You have said a hundred times you love me, and that there is nothing in the world you would not do to convince me of it: what I expect from you is of consequence, and will cost you dear, if you really love me in the manner you have protested. Consider, before I go any farther, consult your own breast, have you dealt sincerely with me, and may I rely on your protestations?' D'Estival, surprized at this preamble, and called on to confirm what he had so often vowed, was obliged to comply. 'Well, then,' continued the countess, 'if so, I may rely on your compliance and regard for me. This restores my tranquillity, and inclines me to open my heart with the greater confidence. Be very attentive, I beg; and if you have a real respect for me, do not interrupt what I am going to say.

'I am satisfied of your great merit,' continued the countess, looking earnestly on D'Estival; 'and, if I had only consulted my own satisfaction, should not have hesitated in rewarding it; but after five and twenty one ought to weigh things more attentively, and foresee the consequences too much precipitation might draw after it, and the repentance it might occasion. Though I am not accountable to any one, and may marry when I please, I have thus long deferred using my liberty. I love my daughter as much as a mother ought; but if I indulge my inclination for you, it will prevent her being so well provided for, as I am not too old to have children; for in that case, instead of being a

great fortune, she would become a very moderate one. This is the essential point, and on which, after making due reflections, I came to a resolution, very plain, as you will see; but the whole world shall not prevail on me to change it.

I am willing to marry you, if you will accept of me with my bare jointure; that is, without including what I design for my daughter. This will be but little, and as your circumstances are but moderate, I shall be the first to advise you, not to consult the passion you seem to have for me, but to do better; and let reason, not love, guide us both. I have an affection for you; I sacrifice it to a maternal tenderness, and offer you my daughter: marry her, she is rich and handsome. It will cost me dear, but I shall have the comfort of having done my duty, and given my daughter and you an opportunity of making each other happy. Such is my plan, surprizing enough no doubt; but now it is laid down to you, there is nothing to be done, but to come to a resolution once for all. You see the affair turns on this point; either to marry me without any thing, being determined not to injure my daughter, or to marry Madame D'Elbieux, notwithstanding your affection for me, and you and I never to see each other more. You must resolve one way or other, these being my intentions;—to-morrow at this hour I expect your final answer. So much time I allow you, that nothing may be concluded in a hurry.' Saying this, the countess retired to her closet, leaving D'Estival astonished at what he had heard, and vastly perplexed how to act in so critical an option, which called for all the wit he was master of.

The affair appeared to be of such importance, that he was convinced he ought to weigh it with the greatest attention; to this purpose, he ordered a horse to be saddled, and went home, that he might deliberate without interruption. Going out of the castle, he was observed by Mademoiselle D'Elbieux from a window; she was much surprized at it, he never going away before without taking leave of her. This behaviour confirmed her first suspicions: pride and self-love were so far humbled, that a sigh ensued, and for

the first time she felt an unusual emotion, never having known what love was before; but now it represented D'Estival as an amiable lover, and with whom she might have been happy, had her mother suffered them to have been united. All his good qualities presenting themselves, reminded her of his ardent addresses, and she was partial enough to think them sincere, and herself beloved: she concluded, her mother had deprived her of this conquest; and, being taken with her lover, had seduced him from her, and obliged him to alter his behaviour in her regard; upon this she conceived a hatred against her for such cruel proceedings. After various reflections, surpassing each other in bitterness, her high spirit hurried her into a notion, that on such an occasion the bounds of decency were to be trampled under foot, and no expedient left untried, to prevent being fooled in this adventure.

Fully satisfied on this head, she retired to her chamber, and wrote to D'Estival, telling him, that the next day, before her mother was stirring, she would make a visit to a relation in a monastery about a league distant; that he would oblige her in giving her a meeting in the way, she having something of importance to communicate to him. She concluded with assuring, that he would have reason to be satisfied with the interview she proposed.

This note she gave a farmer's son, who was devoted to her, and paying him beforehand, insisted upon secrecy in delivering and bringing back the answer. This young fellow, for all his simplicity, after quitting Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, was sensible of the consequence of what he was going to do, and hesitated some time how he ought to behave. As his education had been better than usual, and he continually at the castle, he had seen more of the world than others of his rank; he was sensible, as I said, of the consequence of what was required of him, and dreading the countess's resentment, if he should carry on such an affair without her knowledge, he resolved to shew the letter to his lady; and assuring her, that however her daughter might resent it, he would hazard any thing, rather than be wanting in his duty to her.

The countess doubly rewarded his fidelity, above what her daughter had given

given him, and mightily commended his honesty. Upon opening the billet, she was extremely surprized, and longed to know the motive of such an appointment. In order to penetrate into this mystery, she determined to write another, and send it instead of her daughter's, to change the time and place of rendezvous. She appointed a place in the park, where a door opened upon a fountain, and fixed the latter end of the night for the time of meeting; she added, there were reasons for it, as he should soon be convinced.

When this was wrote, she sent it by the same person her daughter had pitched upon, charging him to bring her D'Estival's answer. He was no sooner gone, but she was terribly dejected, reflecting a thousand times how she ought to behave in a conjuncture where she was doubly concerned, and endeavouring to find out the cause of this sudden step of her daughter's. At first, she imputed it to the conversation she had with D'Estival, which her daughter having discovered, had taken something into her head after her lover was gone, and had a mind to impart it to him. All this only increased her vexation. She did not hate D'Estival, but after the sincere declaration she had made him in their last conversation, she was extremely nettled that he should sacrifice her to her daughter, and presume to form any schemes without consulting her.

The peasant was highly pleased with his own conduct on this occasion, and went merrily on his errand, expecting a treble gratification, instead of one, for his treachery; not doubting, in the least, but M.D'Estival would reward him very amply for his trouble. These pleasing reflections accompanied him on his journey; and meeting with a tavern, he went in to take a glass, as he was flush of money. But it often happens, when a man is agreeably engaged, he cannot always give out at pleasure; instead of one, he drank several, and followed it so close, that, having none of the strongest heads, the liquor overpowering him, he was obliged to go to sleep, and did not wake for four hours. By this time it was dark, which made him heartily repent his indiscretion. However, he comforted himself with thinking to make up the lost time with his haste, and to invent some excuse for what had happened, contrary to his intention.

But one would imagine falsehood is always attended with ill-luck; the peasant went a league too far, lost his way, and instead of M. D'Estival's, he went to M. D'Estourneaux's house. He had never been at either of them, and was only guided by the directions he received. Believing himself right, he asked the first servant he met in the court, if his master was at home? As there was no name on the note, he was answered in the affirmative, and his business enquired, for that the gentleman was come tired from hunting, and gone to bed, and that it was impossible to see him. The farmer's son would have willingly delivered the note himself; but, not to lose time, which was precious, and intending to make amends for his fault by a speedy return, he gave it to the servant, begging him to bring an answer immediately.

The master of the house was not a little surprized at the message and its contents. It was M. D'Estourneaux, the gentleman sportsman, to whom Mademoiselle D'Elbieux had shewn so much regard, to make D'Estival uneasy. M.D'Estourneaux had too much vanity to ponder long on the billet he received; he flattered himself on the occasion, and attributed to his own merit the appointment made him. Accordingly, he presently returned an answer in a very polite and grateful manner, promising to be there at the time, and then expressed how sensible he was of the high favour with which she was pleased to distinguish him. D'Estourneaux was a great reader of romances, and consequently there is no room to doubt of the energy of his style and expressions.

Mademoiselle D'Elbieux's messenger was well pleased with his generosity. Though D'Estourneaux was sordidly covetous, he thought he must do something extraordinary on such an occasion, and ordered a handsome gratification. The peasant made so much haste back, that he reached the castle before they were gone to bed; which might easily happen, since both the countess and her daughter had reasons not to be too early, having such an interesting affair on their hands.

The countess, apprehensive, and not without cause, lest her daughter should see the farmer's son first, had pretended to go to bed, but ordered Du Parc, the old waiting-woman mentioned before,

fore, to watch the peasant's arrival, and artfully prevent his being seen by her daughter. These orders were so well executed, that, for all Mademoiselle D'Elbieux's diligence, the answer was carried to the countess before ever her daughter knew of his return. By the tenderness of the billet, the countess judged D'Estival, (whom she thought the author) to have a large share of her daughter's affections, and that he was as deeply in love on his side. This discovery drew a sigh from her; she blamed in her mind D'Estival and her daughter, regretting very bitterly her kindness for them, which they repaid with so much ingratitude. In order to have her revenge, and not to be their dupe, she dictated a note to the farmer's son, in which D'Estival thanked her daughter in the most tender manner for the singular favour she did him, in giving him a private meeting; but represented to her, at the same time, the hazard she run in going from home on such an affair: he proposed the park-gate and fountain, as had been mentioned in the fictitious note which D'Estourneaux had received. The change was introduced so handsomely, and such plausible reasons alledged, that Mademoiselle D'Elbieux could not possibly take it amiss.

It is easily perceived, that the countess, by this plot, wanted an opportunity to be near the place of meeting, in order to hear what passed, without being concerned or discovered by D'Estival or her daughter: for through her artful counterfeiting the billets, she expected D'Estival would come according to his mistress's appointment; and her daughter, informed by the answer she received where he would be, of course would repair thither. The contrivance was not amiss; the countess did not want for cunning, as had plainly appeared on several occasions. Mademoiselle D'Elbieux at last received the answer, and began to chide her messenger for his long stay; but he excused himself by alledging, that M. D'Estival was hunting, which obliged him to wait his return. After reading the billet, she prepared for the meeting; but in order to prevent any suspicion, if she should be seen going through the garden, she acquainted her maid, whom she could trust, with the design; and as soon as the farmer's son was out of the way, they went from her apartment, as the time drew

near for meeting her lover. At the place appointed, she sat down on a seat of green turf near the gate, and coughed by way of signal in case he should be arrived first. The countess, who was already there behind a large tree, was overjoyed to find she was so well placed, as to hear every word in the approaching conversation. Though she was naturally fond of her daughter, yet her behaviour and false heart had made such deep impressions, that she determined to take an ample revenge, and punish her severely; but she was desirous to detect her in the fact, that the equity of her proceedings might not be contested.

As to D'Estourneaux, whose head was turned by the billet sent in Mademoiselle D'Elbieux's name, he came according to the appointment. Any other would have used all manner of precaution to prevent being discovered; but, whether through fear, or to give notice of his arrival, he hemmed, sung, and entered the park with as much confidence, as if it had been broad day, or there had been no reasons for privacy. This nettled Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, and made her imagine, that such behaviour was owing to his contempt of her, and was on the point of retiring. Her disdain might perhaps have gone farther; but her maid appeased her with saying something that flattered her vanity, as is usual with such creatures, and she determined to stay; not without a firm resolution to rattle the spark, (whom she took for D'Estival) and reproach him, as his indiscretion justly deserved.

Though day-break was at hand, the obscurity of the wood was such, that there was no discerning any objects, and had not D'Estourneaux been so unthinking as to sing as he came along, it would have been impossible to discover him. Mademoiselle D'Elbieux stepped forward to meet him. 'Really, Sir,' said she in a low voice, retiring again to her seat, 'I wonder at you: should I go and never see you more; you would be rightly served.'—'How is this?' replied D'Estourneaux very confidently. 'What have I done, my charmer, to deserve this reprimand?' 'If I did not come sooner——' 'That is not the business,' replied Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, very sharply; 'it is in vain to pretend not to understand me: doubtless you design to draw hither the whole family, to be witness to what

‘ what I am going to say, or rather that you may not be forced to stay too long with me. I suppose by your noise you have a mind to give my mother notice of your being here, to enjoy her dear company, and be rid of mine; but be not deceived, I know how to revenge myself once for all, and perhaps your affairs are not so far advanced as you imagine.’

D’Estourneaux, who comprehended nothing of all this, swore he had no design to make her uneasy; that what she complained of was a custom he had, but far from the design she hinted at. ‘ Can you think me capable,’ said he, ‘ of giving you the least disturbance? And as to your mother, do you imagine I am so foolish as to have any regard for her? An old coquette, who has no other merit than that of being mother to the most lovely creature in the world. If the poor woman, with her paint, her patches, and her faded charms, aims at any thing more, she is mistaken. Her airs have lost their force; and you must banter to pretend to imagine any thing else. But let us leave this subject, my dear,’ continued D’Estourneaux in a pleasant tone; ‘ time is precious, and it shall not be my fault if it is not better employed.’

D’Estourneaux’s expressions made Mademoiselle D’Elbieux laugh, especially the satirical strokes aimed at her mother. Nothing could be more effectual towards appealing her resentment, as it was a regale peculiarly adapted to her taste: instead of silencing him, she gave occasion to repeat them in a severer and louder strain. ‘ I am surprized,’ said she, ‘ to hear you express yourself thus concerning my mother; your sentiments and designs in her regard being no secret to me; nay, of which I have been a witness!’—‘ As to that, Mademoiselle,’ said he, raising his voice so as to be heard very distinctly, ‘ you must certainly jest with me: I a passion for the countess! If you really imagine I ever had any designs on her antiquated carcase, you are much deceived. No, Mademoiselle, be assured I never loved her, nor had the least inclination that way. I am in love, it is true, but it is with your charming person; for the possession of which I would sacrifice every thing that is dear to me. For the future, banish—’

‘ That will not be so easily done,’ replied she, interrupting him with a mysterious air; ‘ you labour in vain, if you endeavour to convince me of it. As to your pretensions to me, which you have so often urged, and repeat now perhaps only to deceive me a second time, and sacrifice me anew, they will not pass: I have undeniable proofs that you are secretly under engagements; these I expect you make a sacrifice of to me, and that in such a manner, as to make me perfectly easy. Consider, Sir,’ continues she very heartily, thinking she talked all this while to D’Estival, ‘ whether I am worth your breaking with her who gives me this uneasiness, and declaring to her in express terms, and to which I must be a witness, that you never loved her, and that if you pretended it, you had good reasons for what you did. This done, I may believe your protestations; and if you persist in loving me, may listen to what my heart will plead in your behalf.’ If the countess was astonished at her daughter’s malice, M. D’Estourneaux was no less so, at what he heard concerning his secret engagements. At first, he had imagined this appointment was owing to the young lady’s desire of secrecy, and his personal merit. Self-love is always forward; but still he could never be so stupid, as to think she could design any thing solid, bad as his circumstances were, and his conduct so much exclaimed against ever since his father’s death, who left him his own master too soon, that he durst not offer marriage to any one for fear of being rejected with scorn. Having done himself justice, in thinking he deserved no better than to marry his maid, he apprehended that the engagements Mademoiselle D’Elbieux mentioned, was that fatal piece of ill management, and which was touched upon to try his sincerity: being persuaded of this, he thought he must act without disguise. ‘ I will not deny, Mademoiselle,’ said he, ‘ that I am under engagements, as you say; I own them: but if throwing them aside will convince you how jealous I am of your favour, I promise you shall never hear of them more.’—‘ We shall see,’ replied Mademoiselle D’Elbieux, ‘ whether you keep your word.’—‘ To-morrow,’ cried D’Estourneaux,

neaux, 'the business shall be dispatched.—Agreed,' continued he, seizing one of her hands, which she drew away; 'to-morrow I break with her for ever, and am entirely yours. Receive this kiss as a pledge.'—'Not so fast,' cried Mademoiselle D'Elbieux; 'behave as you ought, or I am gone; you have learned an ill custom: this reminds me of what I discovered between you and the person I spoke of; she might have her reasons to allow of such freedoms, but I have a thousand to behave otherwise.'

'Now I think on it,' continued she with a malicious smile, 'own sincerely what terms you are upon with her; I fancy things have been carried farther than I at first imagined.—You hesitate,' continued she; 'may I not be trusted; or do you dissemble in order to impose on me a second time? Speak! come to a resolution! I will know the truth; or be gone, and never see me more!'

D'Estourneaux was cruelly perplexed at this challenge; he could not rightly conceive what Mademoiselle D'Elbieux aimed at: he was persuaded these queries related to his secret engagements, but he could not understand that she had been a witness to any of his interviews; this confounded him. All he could gather was, that she knew more of his private marriage than he was aware of; that she was in love with him; and that for fear he should conceal any thing, she pretended to have made these discoveries. With this notion, he answered accordingly; which only served to increase the perplexity.

The jest of all this was, these two were at cross questions; D'Estourneaux spoke of his wife, Mademoiselle D'Elbieux of her mother; and as for the countess, she was quite at a loss; and, desirous to understand what they talked of, drew nearer, and was more attentive than ever.

'I should think myself much obliged,' answered D'Estourneaux, 'if you would not insist on my acknowledging a weakness, of which I am more ashamed than ever, and which must be disagreeable, without furnishing any thing to divert you.'—'That is nothing,' cried she, interrupting him hastily: 'I will know the whole affair; and, unless you will disoblige me,

'you must not omit the least circumstance.'

'Well, then, to satisfy you,' replied he, 'I own we are married.'—'You are married!' cried she, interrupting him again, 'and dare to make your addresses to me! No wonder my mother was so indulging. You have said enough, Sir! I desire to know no more; had I imagined as much, I should not have thus exposed myself.—Farewel for ever! I wish you joy; but let me hear no more of it.' Saying these words, at which D'Estourneaux was thunder-struck, she and her maid took to their heels, leaving him and the countess so amazed at this conclusion, that they retired, without being able to comprehend the strange things they had heard. Any one, on such an occasion, would have been equally perplexed.

It was very odd, in this puzzling interview, that nobody suspected the source of these diverting mistakes. The countess returned with a firm belief that it was D'Estival who came thither; D'Estourneaux went away fully persuaded that the meeting was designed for him; and Mademoiselle D'Elbieux retired to her apartment, well satisfied that her mother was married to D'Estival; and herself imposed on by his addresses. All this was owing to the darkness of the night: the sound of the voice, which might have been of service, was of no use, because the maid insisted on their speaking very low. All together, as one may imagine, produced very diverting consequences.

We shall give the remainder of this affair by and by, not to be wanting to order. Dinner, which my aunt served up, interrupted my father in this part. What regards myself, is too urgent to give place to what belongs to others.

It was with some difficulty I prevailed with my parents to sit down. I longed prodigiously to mention myself, without raising any suspicion how much I was concerned; my aunt gave me an opportunity, by asking them, when she set on the dessert, whether they had heard from me. 'Alas, no, sister!' replied my mother, with an air of trouble at such a question: 'I heard, indeed, that she was for some time in a convent not far from us, by one who was then a pensioner there, but now lives about

a league

‘a league from our village; but she added, that when Mademoiselle D’Elbieux came thither, my daughter disappeared; and that is the last account I had of her.’ Perceiving the discourse was like to rest there, I revived it, by asking how it was possible their daughter should omit acquainting them where she was. ‘In all appearance,’ continued I, ‘she was used unkindly by you, or else she would have behaved otherwise.’ — ‘Far from it, Madam,’ replied my father; ‘she was spoiled with too much fondness, and would always have her own way: to this it is we owe all the vexations she has brought upon us. Where she is, or how she employs herself, I know not; but she must one day answer to God for all the tears her obstinacy has drawn from her mother’s eyes. For my part, I am come to a resolution, and abandon her to her unhappy fate.’

‘Good God, John!’ replied my mother, wiping away the tears, which she could not hide, ‘we must hope that Heaven will open her eyes: you ought not thus to throw the helve after the hatchet. How do we know, after all, but she may not be so much to blame as they pretend? Your son-in-law has too much credit with you.’ — ‘Aye, that is just like you!’ replied my father something peevishly; ‘you are always throwing Colin and your daughter in my teeth: it is not they that occasion these stories of her, but her own bad conduct and ill humours. Has she ever sent us any tidings since she went away? Go, you are a foolish woman, to lament her thus every day; it is more than she deserves: if you would be ruled by me, never mention her name.’ — ‘Look ye, husband,’ replied my mother, ‘nobody should be condemned unheard; for all you can say, my daughter ever had an honest heart, and inclined to virtue: I would lay any wager, were she her own mistress, she would give us evident proofs of it; but, as they say, the absent are always to blame, and when people are down, down with them.’ — ‘True enough,’ replied my aunt, very piteously; ‘witness John Belanger, our ringer; the great bell no sooner broke, but in ringing the other the steeple fell upon him.’

The gravity with which this silly

comparison was uttered, made me laugh very heartily; Barbara, as well as my father and mother, appeared so confounded, that I was obliged to make an apology for my mirth. People in low life, when before those they think are much their betters, always fancy themselves the subject of ridicule; a great deal of caution must be used to prevent their being affronted. I made amends, by an obliging behaviour, for my indiscretion, which was soon forgot. In order to make myself again the subject of their conversation, ‘I like,’ said I to my aunt, ‘your taking your niece’s part; for by the character her mother has given of her, I am interested in her behalf, and am persuaded she would, without very good reasons for the contrary, have given before now convincing proofs of her affection and duty: appearances are not always to be relied on, as they are often deceitful.’ — ‘You are very good, Madam,’ replied my mother, looking steadfastly on me, which she had not ventured to do before, ‘to take my poor Jenny’s part. If I had been believed, people would have had the same opinion of her, and suspended their censures; but every one has not your good sense.’ Saying this, my good-natured dear mother could not avoid melting into tears: Nature exerted herself, and the meeting of our eyes doubtless stirred the sympathy of our hearts; we both cried. By pretending business in my closet, I prevented any discovery on my side, and staid there till I had recovered myself. I could hear my father blame her tenderness and tears. She excused herself, by alledging the great resemblance between her daughter and me, which made such an impression, she said, that she could not refrain from crying. My father owned he was of the same opinion; and, if he had durst, would have mentioned it. After this, their discourse ran upon who I was, and my way of life. My aunt extolled me to the skies, and said, that at court, where she had been with me, none but persons of quality visited me, most of them my near relations; and as to my conduct, no nun ever lived more regular. Then she descanted on my good nature and generosity: she told them I permitted her to sit down to table with me, and was so sweet-tempered, that whenever she did any thing about me,

I always thanked her. My father and mother congratulated with her on her good fortune, advising her to cultivate it; that as for their parts, they were far from being so happy, being hardly able to subsist, especially after being robbed of two good cows, which was their main support. This went to my heart; and I resolved to relieve my dear parents in their necessities, but so as not to discover myself, or give them the least suspicion. In order to this, when I returned to them, I mentioned the relish I had for the country, and an inclination to spend some months there. I had no sooner started this subject, but poor Barbara, who doated on her village, said, that if I continued in so good a resolution, their village must be the place; that it was the best air and finest prospect in all the country. 'Very likely I may go there,' said I, 'being ordered to drink milk for some months; and if your brother and sister will be so good as to comply with what I shall desire, I shall not defer the journey much longer.'—'Be so good!' cried Barbara, in a transport: 'go, go; I'll answer for them; you need only speak your mind.' My father and mother assured me they were ready to serve me, and thought themselves happy to have it in their power. 'I am much beholden to you,' said I, 'for your good will, and take you at your word; but I must desire you to buy me two young cows, that the milk may be the better. I shall also give you money to furnish a chamber; and, as I am fond of country amusements, you must lay out a sum of money, which I design for purchasing a little flock of sheep.' My father, mother, and Barbara, stare, and listened with all their ears; but, without giving them time to reply, I pulled out my purse, and counted down fifty pistoles, with which I had furnished myself, besides a rouleau of five and twenty louis-d'ors. 'There,' said I to my mother, giving her the money, 'that is for the cows and their provision; and what is in that paper is for furnishing your room, which will serve me when I come, and in my absence you may use it yourselves.' My father and mother were so surprized, that their acknowledgments betrayed their confusion. To end them, I rose, saying I had letters to write, and retired to my closet, with a satisfaction that

convinced me there cannot be a greater pleasure than to confer a benefit, and acquit ourselves worthily of our duty.

When my father and mother were gone, and I had recovered from the emotion their presence occasioned, I wrote to Saint Fal; I thought proper to acquaint him with his uncle's visit, and the conversation which had passed. I asked his advice on that subject; and, in order to have an opportunity of acquainting him with the situation of my mind, I praised his honourable and disinterested behaviour, which I knew so well, that I would not dissemble my uneasiness in regard of his cousin, which I told him was not to be expressed. I begged, on that account, to hear from him very speedily, and that he would hide nothing from me.

After writing a long letter, and sending it to the post, I took up a book to amuse my melancholy. I had commenced philosopher, and advanced daily in the knowledge of myself; I found by experience, that to conquer one's self, recourse must be had to amusement. At first every thing that thwarts our inclinations is irksome; but the mind accustoms itself to subjection: where courage is not wanting, reason, and a small share of resolution, will carry the point.

I said, I had sent to the post, and consequently was left alone; in the mean time somebody came to the door: night was coming on, and I did not think proper to answer, much less to open the door. Nevertheless, I was very desirous to know who it could be. When one lives in continual expectation, and under any uneasiness, every thing raises the spirits. If this should be, said I to myself, a letter from Saint Fal, or an express with urgent business, it would grieve me exceedingly to be the occasion of his going away again. Prepossessed with this foolish notion, I could not refrain satisfying my curiosity. When they knocked a second time, I drew near the door and asked their business. 'To speak a word with your Mistress,' they answered. 'What would you have with her?' continued I. 'Lord, open the door!' they replied; 'his grace is coming up.' I thought proper to be silent upon this: a great light shewed me, through the key-hole, a nobleman, whom I knew to be the Duke of ——. I concluded the visit

was designed to me, and trembled for fear: but hearing him say, 'You mistake the door, that is not Junia's apartment,' I began to recover, and returned, thanking Heaven that I had been so cautious. Upon this account, as soon as Barbara returned, I reiterated my commands not to open the door without acquainting me; I began to dread the effects of chance, and resolved to be so much upon my guard, as to have no occasion to repent my want of foresight.

I know not whether I had a surmise of what was to befall me; but, instead of any apprehension of seeing the old marquis, I remember, the day he promised to come, I waited for him with great impatience; the great designs he said he had in my behalf, soothed, even against my inclination, a certain elevation of mind, which raised my hopes far above what I had reason to expect; and when I had wearied myself with vexation, my relief was to feed on these pleasing dreams. Who would have imagined they could ever have been so fully accomplished!

It was near six in the evening; I began to think the marquis would not keep his promise, when he appeared. He enquired in the politest manner after my health; and when I had satisfied him, he asked if I was not tired with that lonely kind of life, which he judged must sometimes prove insupportable. I assured him, I was never happier than when alone, and that in working and reading I defeated the most uneasy hours. 'You are very happy,' replied the marquis, 'to be thus sufficient to yourself: at your age one seldom finds so large a share of reason and contempt of the world; but since it is so, no wonder you inspire such ardent passions. Now we are upon this subject,' continued he, without giving me time to reply, 'you little think how great a lustre you have added to your charms and conduct. A person turned of threescore, and of quality too, has in his breast a great desire of making your fortune; he has intrusted me with the secret of his passion; notwithstanding his age, his complaisance and tenderness, which I can answer for, will make him acceptable. I endeavoured to persuade him, that considering your good sense, he could run no hazard in addressing

himself immediately to you; but he has no mind to discover himself, till he has some hopes of not being rejected.' Whilst the marquis uttered this, his eyes were fixed upon me. I looked down, and in the uncertainty of what to answer, or what was meant by all this, I thought the best way would be to turn it to ridicule. 'You have a great deal of wit,' continued the marquis, discovering my evasion, 'and it is no easy matter to impose upon you. Nevertheless, I solemnly swear I am in earnest; you pretend to think me in jest, but what I have told you is matter of fact. We will say no more of it, since you do not as yet think it worth your notice. Perhaps hereafter a properer time may offer itself; a lover of threescore must have patience.'

Saying this, the old marquis looked at me with an air of trouble and confusion. I was at a loss what to think, or how to behave; the lover he spoke of, resembled himself so well, that I was satisfied my conjectures were not wrong, especially on calling to mind what his son had often told me concerning his amorous disposition; this thought made me grave in my turn, and I resolved not to understand him, to prevent the riddle being explained, by giving him artfully to understand, that I was averse to all such proposals. This succeeded: the marquis, with all his cunning, seemed to be outwitted: but this is not the place to unravel the affair. To return.

The conversation ran upon a different subject. The old marquis told me, he was labouring in my behalf at court; that he had reminded the king of what he had done for me heretofore; that this had given him an opportunity of mentioning my merit, and grateful remembrance of the gratification with which I had been honoured; that the monarch, hearing the marquis was my godfather, and that he espoused my interest, did not seem very averse to allowing me a pension; that he was in hopes it would be such as would maintain me, independently of foreign succours.

I must own I was much pleased with this piece of service; my vanity found it's account in it. One of my greatest vexations was the necessity I was under of being beholden to others, and with-

out examining whether this was not a generous artifice (as it was likely enough) for assisting me, I thanked him very sincerely for the good news. 'The thing is not yet done,' cried the marquis, charmed at the success of his project, 'but I do not doubt at my return to wish you joy of it: I shall be extremely pleased,' continued he; 'for I vow I have nothing more at heart than your interest.'

I answered in a proper manner to this compliment. It grew late, and Barbara came a second time to know if I would go to supper. The old marquis drew near with a respectful air, which pleased me, and asked very complaisantly my leave to stay whilst I supped. 'Alas, my lord!' answered I, something perplexed at his request, 'knowing me so well as you do, is it possible to refuse you?'—'Certainly,' replied the marquis; 'I consider you in a light so different from what you imagine, that the least hint from you to me is an order not to be disputed: as a proof of it, I am ready to leave you if you are so unjust as to think me capable of assuming a right to the least complaisance on your side; a single word will convince you. Is my company unseasonable?'—'No, my lord,' replied I, obliging him to sit down again, and charmed with his politeness; 'your behaviour deserves even a greater regard than your quality, and encourages me so far, that I almost dare presume to offer my supper, such as it is.'—'Ah! you oblige me infinitely,' replied the marquis, endeavouring to kiss my hand, which I drew from him; 'this shews how charming a creature you are.' The marquis said a thousand fine things besides on this subject. Supper, which was brought in, afforded a suspension of compliments; I did the honours of my table pretty well, and may venture to affirm, the nobleman imbibed more love than wine, though that was not spared, he seeming to relish it.

If any precise woman should blame my complaisance in admitting the marquis's private visits, I hope she will condescend to inform me how I ought to have behaved. Had she been in my place, perhaps she would not have come off so well. Why should I flatter the marquis for his probity? To pique him upon the point of honour, to prevent

his taking undue liberties, such an address is excusable, and a woman is allowed to have recourse to the like artifices, when their sole aim is to make their innocence or virtue revered.

I had no reason to repent of my conduct; the old marquis was very gay, and made love, but with the same respect as if I had been a woman of the first quality. He desired a song; I complied; he made me a thousand compliments on the subject. When the clock struck eleven, of his own accord he said, he would not make me regret my condescension, and that it was time for him to retire. I received this last proof of his deference as I ought; and indeed it was so acceptable, that I declared my satisfaction. After this he took leave, assuring me I should never have the least reason to complain of his passion, much less of his behaviour.

During eight days that he constantly visited, I had no grounds for the least suspicion: sometimes we played at tick-tack, which he taught me; at other times he gave me an account of what passed at court. This was an inexhaustible subject. I must own this nobleman's conversation was so interesting, and amused me so very much, that I was never tired with it. At first I was upon the reserve, apprehending his obliging me to explain myself with respect to his son, which would have made me very uneasy; but when I was freed from this care by his discretion, I soon behaved with my usual cheerfulness. It was not disagreeable; my temper is pliable, and easily accommodates itself to my company: I have often experienced this, and reflect with some pleasure, that it has generally been relished. Pride interferes a little here; I ask pardon: but if it is becoming to acknowledge our faults, is it not sometimes allowable to mention our good qualities? In my opinion it should be so, there being a kind of equity in such a behaviour.

On the eighth day the marquis informed me he was obliged to return to court, and that he should not see me for a fortnight. 'I swear,' said he, 'no journey of a long time has given me so much uneasiness. I am so used to the pleasure of your company, that I suffer cruelly in tearing myself from you: never before could I be said to know what dependence is, and if you think

think me sincere, you will contribute to make it supportable; there may be a method thought of to render it so.' The old marquis, for the little time he had visited, had so much accustomed me to this sort of discourse, that I gave little regard to it.

The day following, this farewell made me suffer in my turn. The marquis, old as he was, had the talent of diverting me. When the hour came at which he used to visit, I was alone, and gave myself up to melancholy and vexation: time hung very heavy on my hands; no news from Saint Fal, and consequently none of my lover. He was no longer guilty from the time I knew his life exposed, and every moment I wearied Heaven with my prayers for his safety.

One morning, when trouble had waked me sooner than ordinary, I heard the relation of something that had passed in the army, with a list of the slain and wounded, cried about the streets. This struck a terror into me, for fear of finding the real cause of my not hearing from those in whose behalf I interested myself. However, I desired my aunt to buy it, and received it with an aching heart. Barbara brought the hawker up with her. I asked him whether the account related any thing that had lately passed, and might be depended upon. 'Without doubt,' answered the hawker, 'it is not above a month since it happened; we had the relation but yesterday.' I guessed by his answer the paper he bragged of was not much to be credited, and told him, that if he had no fresher account, it did not suit my purpose. The hawker, to retrieve his indiscretion, said, if I was curious in knowing what passed in Germany, he would bring me the Gazette twice a week, assuring me, that every thing which passed in the army was to be found there. I took him at his word, and promised to satisfy him so well for it, that he assured me he would bring the Gazette, which was every moment expected, that very day. I was highly pleased to think I had found out an expedient to know what passed. As it was a holiday, and I desired to go early to mass, to avoid meeting any one, I sat down to my toilette, where I was not a little surprized at what happened.

Looking for something in one of the boxes, I found a packet that I did not know, and which I examined. It prov-

ed to be a purse, such as counters are put into, very well secured, which, by its weight, I judged to be full of gold. I was not mistaken; it contained two hundred pistoles, and the following billet.

'YOU have here two thousand livres, a gratuity the king grants you by my hands; he has appointed you, besides, one thousand yearly. For so good an economist as I know you to be, this little revenue, I am persuaded, will suffice. I would not deliver the money myself, apprehending your acknowledgments; you owe none to me: as to your friendship, that is another affair, and to which I shall not so easily give up my pretensions.

'THE MARQUIS OF L. V.'

This piece of generosity, and the manner of doing it, surprized me very much. It came very seasonably, my ready money being almost exhausted by the assistance I had given my parents, and consequently I must have wanted very shortly. I admired the Divine Providence, and from my heart acknowledged its bounties. My fervency in the church surpassed what I had ever felt before. The poor were amply remembered; and before I left the sanctuary, I gave money to the sacristan, to have masses offered up for the marquis's and the count's preservation from the dangers to which they were exposed. I always had a confidence in such acts of piety, and have frequently experienced that they are never thrown away; the first effect I received from their efficacy, was resignation and peace of mind, and this certainly was no small advantage.

The hawker, who had promised me the Gazette, brought it after dinner. I looked earnestly for the article which might give me some account of the persons for whom I was concerned. Alas! what became of me, when I found a passage which too plainly confirmed what Saint Fal had wrote concerning the marquis! The paper gave an account, that a detachment, commanded by a man of quality, had been cut off, and the commander left for dead on the place. 'Ah, Heavens!' cried I, bathed in tears, 'the marquis is no more! No wonder

‘wonder I did not hear from his kinsman!’ Overwhelmed as I was, I fainted away.

Two hours passed before I came to myself. I found my bed surrounded with strange faces, and Barbara on her knees crying bitterly, having given me over for dead. A priest, whom she had sent for in her fright, asked how I did. ‘Alas!’ cried I very piteously, ‘more sick in mind than body.’—‘Courage, Madam,’ replied he; ‘Heaven will relieve you. In the mean time, resign yourself into the hands of Providence.’ At this the company withdrew, and left me alone with the clergyman, whom I have mentioned on another occasion, (the person I sent for on account of the packet thrown from Junia’s window.) I looked upon him as one sent from Heaven at this terrible conjuncture. I acquainted him how much I was afflicted, letting him know in general, that my fainting was occasioned by hearing of the death of a person who was dear to me, and whom I looked upon as a man that was to have been one day my husband.

The discreet ecclesiastick accommodated himself to my weakness; comforted me with very moving expressions, and warded off the despair which was ready to seize me, by making me sensible of the little credit I ought to give to the publick papers, which he said were very uncertain. He exhorted me to have recourse to God, and be assured of an open refuge; in a word, he handled the subject with so much address, that he prevailed on me to promise not to indulge my grief at the expence of my health; that it was a heinous offence against God; and that an attachment to creatures, which drew on one’s own destruction, was a crime for which I must one day be responsible. He concluded with promising to visit me from time to time, and to be mindful of me in his prayers.

Immediately after he was gone, a tall thin man, whose monstrous black wig struck a terror into me, advanced, without speaking a word, to take me by the hand. My head was still in such confusion, that not perceiving him to be a physician, I cried out for help. ‘These symptoms,’ said he, seizing my arm, and feeling my pulse in spite of my resistance, and addressing himself to an elderly lady who came with him, ‘indi-

cate a manifest delirium; and what passed just now was a fit of it. The lady must be bled immediately, whilst this interval lasts.’ What with weakness and surprize, I was unable to interrupt this expeditious gentleman. The lady, who had an entire confidence in him, said, by way of exclamation, ‘Good God! how favourable is Providence! If Doctor Purple had not been at home, what might not have happened!’ During the lady’s soliloquy, the physician, with an air as if he would be obeyed, ordered my aunt to fetch Mr. Lancelet the surgeon to let me blood in the foot. This terrible order recovered my voice; I told Dr. Purple, I was obliged to him for his care, but that, God be thanked! there was no occasion for the surgeon. ‘You will see,’ said he, without giving me any answer, ‘Mr. Lancelet will come to late; another fit is coming on.’—‘Hey day!’ cried I, interrupting him very hastily; ‘what is the meaning of all this? Do you imagine I am mad?’—‘God forbid, Madam!’ replied the physician, looking very mysteriously on the strange lady, who seemed to pity me; ‘we are far from any such thoughts. Have a good heart, Madam,’ continued he, holding a candle to my face; ‘we will set you up again, please God.—Do you see,’ said he, in a low voice to the lady at my bed’s head, ‘that sparkling in the eyes and staring look? infallible proofs of outrageous madness. An empirick, as I am, is never deceived by the eye; though the whole faculty were present, I would not bate them an inch. Really the ignorance of our physicians is prodigious; a convincing proof of which is, the envy they bear men of skill like me. Patience! they talk of making Paris too hot for me: may be so; but woe betide them. I have a whole volume ready, which I will print in Holland, that shall make them repent their proceedings.’

The lady approved with a nod what he said, and asked him what remedies he thought of employing to cure my madness. ‘Very simple ones,’ replied the empirick, who was certainly the maddest of the two: ‘the gentlemen of the faculty will hold a patient in hand three years with their lenitives and gimen; whereas my remedies have their effect in nine days. You shall see the experiment. I will have her bled

bled three days; consequently twice a day: I will emaciate her three days more with bread and water; the last three days she shall be set up to the neck in a cold bath for six hours each day; and if on the tenth she be not cured, and as much in her senses as I am, I will forfeit the name I have acquired, and am willing to be thought as ignorant as an apothecary's apprentice of three months standing.

I was so terrified at the murderous designs this empirick was projecting against me, that I cried out bitterly. Barbara, who was now returned, ran to me all in tears, and enquired in the tenderest manner what was the matter. 'Alas, my dear friend!' said I, pointing to the terrible Doctor Purple, 'send that man away; the very sight of him makes me tremble.'—'Is Mr. Lancelet coming?' cried the empirick, without regarding what I said. 'Oh, here he is!' continued he, seeing him enter the room.—'Come, Sir, to the operation. But first of all,' added he, pulling out a paper, 'take notice of this permission which has been granted me for visiting of patients during one month; it is proper to do things in order, that you may go to work with the greatest confidence.' The surgeon, without making any reply, produced a fillet, his lancets, and called for warm water. Whilst this conspiracy and the preparations were carrying on, I made a sign for Barbara to come to me; then making her draw the curtains about me, caught up a gown, and escaped out at the bed's feet into another room, securing the door, with a firm resolution not to open it till Doctor Purple and his colleague were gone.

I could hear from thence the uproar my escape, when perceived, occasioned. 'See!' cried the empirick, 'can there be a more convincing proof of madness, than flying from remedies that are necessary?—You, Madam, that brought me hither,' continued he, speaking to the lady in the chamber, 'are a witness of the little ceremony with which I am used. Are you not of my opinion?' said he, drawing near the door: 'would it not be a charity, a meritorious action, to break it open and bind the patient?' At this, under an apprehension of their forcing the door, I cried out aloud, and threatened to

complain at the windows of the outrage.

The surgeon, who was something reasonable, begged of me to moderate myself, and assured me he was a man of too much honour, and too much my humble servant, to bleed me without my consent. 'Sir, I believe you,' answered I in tears; 'but Doctor Purple is so bent on my destruction, that he will oblige you to do it.'—'No, Madam, you need not fear it!' replied Lancelet; 'I give you my word I will be the first to oppose it. Open the door, that I may have the satisfaction of discoursing with you, and you will find I have a greater regard for your commands than those of any other person.'

The lady, whom I mentioned, and who was really good-natured, and doubtless moved at my tears, made the same protestations, and promised me that I should not be molested. Encouraged with this, I ventured to open the door. The surgeon and the lady came in, shutting the door against Purple, who was for forcing his way, and made me cry out for fear a second time. 'Recover yourself, Madam,' said the surgeon, 'and do me the honour to inform me, what has occasioned the trouble I see you in.' His polite behaviour gave me new life; I related to him all that had passed, and this with so much calmness, that he shrugged up his shoulders, saying it was not the first piece of folly the man had committed; that it was surprizing he should have leave to practise. He added, that he did not want skill, but that his methods were so expeditious, that none but those whose cases were desperate would venture to be under his hands.

This extravagant adventure concluded with my gratifying very handsomely the empirick and surgeon, who went away well satisfied, but created such a distaste in me to prescriptions and physicians, that I never could be prevailed upon since, even on the most urgent occasions, to make any use of them. It is true, I have often been made sensible that this is prejudice, but it is what I cannot conquer, and probably may carry to my grave.

The lady, who was so good as to come to my assistance when Barbara found me fainting away, had an apartment

ment in the same house with me: a great devotee, and one who had taken a liking to me, from seeing me, she said, pray at church, where she continually was, with great fervency. As soon as she discovered, by Barbara's outcries, that I was in danger, as my good aunt imagined, she resolved to assist both body and soul; and it was owing to her charity that I was visited by the clergyman and Doctor Purple, in both of whom she had an entire confidence, though very differently grounded; the one being a man of sense and well qualified for his office, the other little better than stark mad, as the reader may judge from what has been said.

As soon as I was freed from the attack I had undergone, and Barbara had acquainted me with the readiness the devout lady had shewn in assisting me, I returned her thanks in the politest manner I was mistress of. She made me, on her side, great protestations of serving me, and retired, after assuring me of her earnest desire of being better acquainted, to which I answered with a low curtsy. I had suffered too much by my first acquaintance to hazard a second. Nothing could prevail on me to change my conduct.

When I was left at liberty, I took a review of what had occasioned the trouble I had suffered. In looking over the fatal Gazette which had bereaved me of my senses, whether the clergyman's discourse prevailed, or that I found the article not so very positive as I had imagined, I thought there was some room to doubt, and from thence entertained a faint glimpse of hope. The marquis's name was not inserted; there might very well have been several detachments, commanded too by people of quality, and possibly it might not be the person for whom I was so nearly concerned. I went to sleep with this soothing reflection.

Barbara, whom I would fain have sent to bed, but was obstinately bent on watching by me, fell asleep; my consideration for her prevented me from waking her. Happy for me that Providence ordered it thus; for had I been left alone in the incident I am going to relate, I must have died away through fear; the event will shew it.

The trouble in which I had spent that day, doubtless was the cause of a frightful dream with which I was dis-

turbed. I thought a ghost loaded with chains appeared, looking mournfully upon me: I shut my eyes at his horrible aspect; but, compelling me to open them, I saw in his arms a bleeding corpse, all covered with wounds, which I knew to be my lover. I thought this spectacle made so deep an impression on my terrified senses, that I remained quite stupified; and my heart was so oppressed, that, suddenly pensive, I beheld several dismal objects without shedding a tear. My lover's father led a woman, who seemed to have my air and features: melancholy appeared in the countenance of this other self, and what she did seemed done by compulsion. The old marquis kneeled down with her at the feet of the phantom: the corpse he carried seemed to revive at the woman's approach, whom the marquis presented to it, and the blood no longer flowed from his wounds. He took his father's hand, and that of the woman who resembled me, and joined them. I stared, and considered with emotion what passed: but how was I surprized, when, looking on the bridegroom, I perceived he was grown young again; and, instead of the old marquis, it appeared to be the son, who, embued in blood, had been carried by the phantom! I turned hastily to him. Astonished at this, Saint Fal succeeded to the phantom, and seemed covered with wounds, as the young marquis had been. His countenance was so mournful and moving, that I was going to comfort him in the excessive sorrow with which he appeared to be overwhelmed; when on a sudden my curtains being drawn back, I started out of my sleep, and discovered, by the watch-light, a man armed with a poniard, which he presented to my breast, saying, 'You are dead if you make the least noise. Your purse, or your life, this instant!'

O Heavens! to you I own my preservation! My aunt, who had begun to doze, as I said before, was not so well composed as to sleep sound. She heard the robber breathe; who, having formed his design, lay hid just by her; and it pleased God she should take no notice of it. Instead of giving way to fear, she rose up under pretence of speaking to me, and said, in order to compass her ends, that since I was going to rest, and wanted nothing, she would go to bed



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bed in the kitchen. But instead of that, she stole out softly; and going down stairs she waked a tradesmen, by means of a chamber-window that looked into the court, who kept several men, and acquainted him with the danger I was in, and the assistance of which I stood in need. The man, surprized at this, called up his people in an instant, and sending one for the watch, came up softly with the rest in order to assist me.

He entered just as the villain was forcing me to rise in order to give my money. The wretch dropped the poniard at this unexpected sight, fell at my feet, and begged for mercy. More dead than alive, I had not strength to speak. The tradesman and his people immediately secured him, and I presently knew him again to be the hawker who brought the Gazette. He confessed his intention of robbing me, and with bitter lamentations accused my imprudence, as having given occasion to it, protesting that, during forty years of life, he had ever behaved honestly; but the opportunity, and his own extreme poverty, had prompted him to this wickedness.

The account he gave was as follows. That at the time he brought the Gazette, some one came to receive money; that the quantity which I shewed, made him think of robbing me at a proper opportunity; that my keeping the Gazette so long afforded him leisure to take notice of the house: nevertheless, he did not intend to put his design in execution that day; but my fainting away having created a great confusion, he determined to take that opportunity. He hid himself in a little closet near my bed; and, but for Barbara, all would have been over. God Almighty, who watches over and protects his servants, did not permit it; and shewed, by the instrument he was pleased to employ in preserving my life, the greatness of his power, and that he inspires, when he pleases, the most fearful with courage. The secret ways of the Divine Grace are wonderful, and the great Dispenser can never be sufficiently adored.

The same power supported and encouraged me to save the life of the wretch who had attempted mine; a moment later he had fallen into the hands of justice. I prevailed with the trades-

man to let him go, and in case the watch came before he got away, to say he had made his escape. I was so much moved at his great want, which he described with tears and bitter regret for his giving way to so black a crime, that I gave two louis-d'ors to help him to maintain ten small children he had upon his hands; exhorting him to live honestly, and promising farther assistance from time to time, on condition his wife or one of his children came for it, and that I never saw him more.

I shall say no more of my conduct on this occasion; the satisfaction which arose from it was a sufficient recompence. The watch returned as they came, much diverted, without doubt, at my groundless fright. As for the workmen, whose sleep was so luckily disturbed, I gratified them for their pains, as they well deserved. Their master was loaded with acknowledgments; and the next day I presented him with a gold-headed cane, assuring him I was much concerned it was no better: I valued myself on my gratitude for his zeal and readiness to serve me.

As for my dear aunt Barbara, to whom I owed my life, I promised not to leave the world till I had given ample proofs of my obligations to her. A rigid prudence prevented my declaring on this occasion who I was; but her simplicity was not to be trusted. Her indiscretion might have drawn consequences of so much weight, that I was silent against my inclination; nevertheless, I made amends by redoubling my kindness, and I perceived with pleasure she was sensible of it: this eased me of part of the concern my silence occasioned. A certain turn of mind is never tired with conferring benefits on those who are thought deserving of them.

I lay awake the remaining part of that night, and only began to rest when day was far advanced. It was near four in the afternoon when Barbara waked me, on account of a great gentleman in a black gown, with two attendants, desiring to speak with me. I was sufficiently surprized at such a visit, and questioned her about their behaviour. Her answer was, that the gentleman in the gown had enquired of her if Madam Des Roches was at home, (for, through inadvertency, I went still

by that name;) and upon her saying I was asleep, he replied, that I must be waked, having some business with me. My enquiry afforded no light into the affair. I was preparing to rise for receiving this extraordinary visit, when the commissary, who waited in the anti-chamber, came very civilly into my room, acquainting me, that I need not give myself that trouble, he having but a word or two to say. Chairs were set; and having taken his place, he addressed himself to me as follows.

‘ Last night, Madam, the watch brought a man before me; as he appeared like one who was making his escape, and it being too late for examining him, he was committed. On his examination this morning, having contradicted himself when asked from whence he came, he was confined a close prisoner. A letter, directed for you, Madam, and which he entrusted to the turnkey, in hopes of its being sent, was intercepted, and broke open on suspicion. In it he begs for mercy, and that you would not discover him, else he is a dead man. Being examined as to this point, he declared, that he had brought you the Gazette, and staid supper with your servants, which was the occasion of his being out so late. This agrees so ill with the contents of the letter, that I am come, Madam, to know what complaint he would have stifled, and which would be fatal if known. With your leave, I will take down your information. You are at liberty to act as you please; but I must inform you, that it ought to be conformable to the truth, because there will be witnesses called, examinations taken, and it may be of ill consequence, if it should appear that you have not given a true account. The appearance you make, Madam, is such as requires my acting in this affair with great deference.’

Whilst he was speaking, I could not but admire the Divine Justice, which pursues wickedness; but was concerned at the same time that my good intention was frustrated. I was at a loss how to answer, being sensible that the wretch’s life depended on my information. The commissary waited for me to begin. At last, I said it was true, that being just going to bed, I found this man in

my chamber, which terrified me so much, that I screamed out and raised the house; but, having enquired into the truth, I understood that he had fallen asleep after supper in the kitchen; and that when he waked, in endeavouring to go out, he had missed his way, and came into my chamber; that being frightened himself, when suspected for a thief, he fled away to prevent being seized. This had a plausible appearance. The master of the house and his servants, whom I prepared, agreed to the same story, by which means the prisoner got his discharge in two days, as his wife informed me when she came to return thanks; and assured me that she and her family were bound to pray for me as long as they lived.

All these vexations, under which I had laboured for some time, affected my health. By degrees I grew so pale and yellow, that every one pitied me. My good aunt, seeing me in this condition, exerted herself to free me from the deep melancholy which hung upon me. ‘ You have certainly, Madam, a mind to kill me,’ said the good creature. ‘ Is it possible that one of your age should thus bury herself alive? A young lady acts very discreetly to live retired, I agree with you, and to give no handle to censorious people; but still she must not forswear all diversions. Will you never cease bewailing the loss of your good man? Why, has he left nobody behind him, that he is so much lamented? Is it impossible to find his fellow?’

Oppressed as I was with affliction, I could not sometimes forbear smiling at her quaint speeches; but this was but a winter’s sun, soon obscured by the gloomy clouds of grief. My melancholy dream was still present to my imagination: alas! too sure a prediction, as I soon experienced.

One day, whilst I was standing very pensive at my window, a coach stopped at the door, which I knew belonged to the old marquis. I started without knowing why. When he entered the room, he appeared very sorrowful, though he strove to conceal it. ‘ Good God!’ cried he, ‘ what is the matter? are you sick, and did not acquaint me with it?’ His gentleman, who followed him, whispered something in his ear. ‘ Very true,’ replied the marquis, to what he had heard; ‘ but I am

'I am in so much trouble, I did not reflect on it.—Ah, Jenny, Jenny!' continued the marquis, throwing himself into a great chair, 'how cruelly do you make me feel my tenderness for my son!'

Scarce had the old nobleman uttered those words, when a trembling seized me. I concluded my dream accomplished, and my lover no more. This notion prevailed so much, that I shrieked out, and wept bitterly. It was owing to some drops I had taken just before, that I did not faint away; for, as I was subject to vapours and fits, I might very well expect it, considering the occasion. I learned from the discourse of the marquis and his gentleman, which they did not observe, that my lover was dangerously wounded in the head, after giving signal proofs of his courage; and that Saint Fal was taken prisoner in the battle, which was fought two days after the preceding action.

This melancholy news threw me into a fit of sickness. The physicians, sent for by the marquis, on the fourth day gave me over; unless Nature, by a prodigious effort, could shake off from about my heart the bile which was on the point of suffocating me. Nothing that I took staid; from whence they concluded there were no hopes left.

The old marquis's prudence and resolution doubtless preserved my life. He never left my bed-side; and seeing me given over, he tried two things which rescued me from the jaws of death. One was an emetick; though seldom prescribed, and then only in desperate cases, oftener killing than curing: he sent for six grains, and instead of washing it well with water, as is usual, he gave me the whole dose in a spoonful of broth; and, to prevent my bringing it up again immediately, he held my head up, till it had been long enough in my stomach to have it's effect. His other contrivance, employed at the same time, did not a little contribute to my recovery. A courier, who had his instructions, came in boots, pretending to be just arrived from the army, giving an account aloud, that the young marquis was on the road home; that as to his being dangerously wounded, it was a mistake, he having only received a slight contusion, which in four days was entirely cured.

Notwithstanding my lowness of spi-

rits, and a continued fever, which took away my speech, I could hear what was said, though, oppressed as I was, I did not reflect much upon it; but, when the courier delivered his message, a secret joy spread itself in my heart, and freed it from the load with which it had been so long overwhelmed. The emetick, whose efficacy was thus assisted, worked so forcibly, that in the violence of reaching it was apprehended I should expire. A black, thick, bilious matter, rushed out in torrents, and the convulsions in which I expelled this enemy of life, burst an imposthume within me. The marquis's surgeon, a man of great skill, assured him, that if I survived this crisis, all would be well: my youth promised as much. In half an hour's time the operation ceased, my colour returned, the agitation abated, and I fell fast asleep.

In two days I was judged to be out of all danger, and my mind regained it's usual tranquillity. After returning thanks to Heaven for preserving my life, I made my acknowledgment to the marquis for the great tenderness I was informed he had shown in my regard. He appeared overjoyed to find me in a situation of mind that seemed secure against a relapse. He assured me, that he was entirely attached to me, and still persisted in feeding the false hopes he had given me concerning his son: he was so complaisant, as to forge letters from him, and read them to me, that I might be perfectly easy as to that point. Three days convinced me I was entirely out of danger. He returned to Versailles, leaving a servant at Paris, to bring him an account of my health every day till his return.

I was upon my feet again and gathering strength, when at last I received a letter from Saint Fal. I opened it with joy, expecting a confirmation of the agreeable news which had been intended to please me. But, alas! the agony I felt on reading what follows! Sure no one was ever thus often overwhelmed!

I Promised you to act with sincerity and exactness; this day, lovely Jenny, you have a convincing proof of it. How will you receive the tidings I here send? Shall I not have room to reproach myself for keeping my word? I shall now I have an exact account of your health, and if

‘ I hear my letter has any ill consequences, depend upon it, I shall ever after write to you as one who wants resolution, and whose weakness must be consulted.

‘ I wrote you word, lovely Jenny, that my cousin had obtained the command of a detachment, and that I apprehended his melancholy might hurry him too far. My fears were but too well grounded. His courage and vexation put him upon attacking a convoy escorted by treble his number; he fell into an ambuscade, and without a miracle, must have perished. Dubois, his valet de chambre, whose affection for his master is above the common pitch, saved his life, and brought him back to the camp with two wounds. But, make yourself easy, they are not mortal, and perhaps our apprehensions magnify the danger.

‘ Two days after, both armies fought a pitched battle: victory was on our side, but I was taken prisoner. I am heartily concerned, as I cannot see you so soon as I expected, and am always uneasy when absent from you.

‘ You have here inclosed a letter the marquis had begun to me before the action, and finished after he was wounded; it will serve to convince you that he was not so ungrateful as you imagined, and is not in so much danger as you may perhaps apprehend. I shall say nothing of the proofs I here give you of my regard: indeed they ought to make some impression, since I am so much my own enemy, as to find a pleasure in consulting your inclinations, though in opposition to my own.

‘ I expect, lovely Jenny, the dear pleasure of hearing you are well, and cannot be easy till then, considering the ill news I have here sent. Does my uncle continue his visits? To own the truth, I was amazed to hear he had found you out, and was apprized who you really are. He must be very cunning, and have very particular reasons, to get so good information. He wrote to me, but took no notice; I shall do the same, for an éclaircissement will not be very favourable to me. My prison, and whatever else can happen, will not be troublesome, provided you still allow me a share in your esteem, as I certainly deserve by what

‘ you possess of mine, and the perfect respect I shall preserve to the end of my life.

‘ From Manheim. ‘ SAINT FAL.’

I read in great haste the marquis's letter to Saint Fal. Here it is, word for word.

‘ I Left Paris, dear kinsman, quite frantick, and am running to an engagement in despair. The cause of my melancholy is a secret to the world, as well as my motive for commanding the detachment; but it must not be so to you. Jenny no longer loves me, but gives the preference to the Duke of —; there is not the least room to doubt it. This occasioned my journey. My meeting every day my rival at the general's quarters, put me upon obtaining a separate command. Every thing is become insupportable, since the ungrateful creature has betrayed me. In vain have I strove to throw off her tyrannical yoke; she possesses my heart, and her image is ever present in my mind. Fatal passion! Unhappy error, which leaves no room for relief but in the arms of Death!

‘ My scouts inform me that the enemy is but two leagues distant. I fly to meet them. Dear cousin, farewell. Remember, no one ever loved his rival, and yet you have been always dear to me.

‘ If Jenny's new lover should deceive her, be you her comforter. I tremble for her: I know her necessities. Do not forsake her.’

What follows was in another hand.

‘ I Am defeated, wounded, and satisfied, my dear kinsman. The last word will seem extraordinary, but I will explain it. In the mean time, do not be surprized that I make use of my secretary's pen: I cannot use my own; but they give me great hopes upon taking off the first dressing. My hurt is a cut on the head with a broadsword. If Jenny still loves me, as a gentleman named Melicourt writes me word, and if what he declares himself a witness of be true, I shall comfort myself for the loss of one eye, which is in some danger, provided the other

other be left to behold once more the object of my passion, and admire her charms. I am satisfied. Assist in obtaining my peace, unless you think me unworthy of it. Is not this making too rigorous a trial of your friendship, and those sentiments we mutually cultivate? But I know my man, and that suffices.

‘THE MARQUIS OF L. V.’

What tears did not this letter cost me! I plainly discerned the noble character of my amiable marquis. How often did I kiss the dear characters, whose price his bleeding wounds so greatly enhanced! What anxiety did I not undergo! Why would not decency permit me to take a post-chaise, fly to the army, and convince him, that he alone was worthy of my love, and capable of making me happy? A thousand projects presented themselves for proving to the dear man my tenderness and constancy, without hitting upon one expedient to my liking. Pondering upon the marquis's letter, I was struck with Melicourt's behaviour; I was the more obliged to him, as he never mentioned a syllable of it in the letters I had received from him since I had been at Paris. I concluded that the man who conferred a benefit for the sole pleasure of doing it, was a true friend, and the properest person to be employed in sending to the army, as I was determined to have a true account of the marquis, and to convince him I was not unworthy his affections.

This project was no sooner thought on, but I resolved to put it in execution. I wrote immediately to Melicourt, and sent my letter by an express. I made no doubt, but that on the reception of my letter, he would instantly come to know how he might be serviceable to me. Saint Agnes's affair, I knew, would not be decided in upwards of six weeks, because it had been found necessary to write again to Rome concerning some difficulties newly started, which interval was abundantly more than sufficient to go and come from the place to which I intended to ask the favour of him to repair.

When Saint Agnes's lover came to Paris, I made him sensible how glad I was to see him. In order to introduce the subject, I returned him thanks for

his generous behaviour in my regard: but when he perceived the drift of my discourse; he prevented me, and instead of starting any difficulties, he said he was obliged to me for giving him an opportunity of making his court to a nobleman, for whom he had so great a respect as the Marquis of L. V. He informed me, that the journey would be of singular service to him, because he should shortly stand in need of very powerful protectors at court; that this opportunity seemed contrived on purpose to oblige him, and for which he should think himself indebted to me as long as he lived.

It is very justly said, that the manner of conferring a benefit enhances the price. I was charmed with Melicourt's manner of complying with my request. I gave him directions how I would have him manage the affair, with a letter for the marquis; but desired it might not be delivered till there were hopes that the surprize of hearing from me would not affect his health. But what I chiefly insisted upon was, that he would, without disguise, send me word what condition he found my lover in, and his behaviour on receiving my letter. Every thing being concluded on during supper, such as it was, Melicourt sent his servant for post-horses, and set out that very night. We had computed, that he would be three days upon the road, and that on the seventh I might expect to hear from him. All these regulations contributed to make me easy; but above all, the marquis's letter, which convinced me I was still dear to him. This engrossed all my thoughts, I had no leisure for any thing else. When one is really in love, every other satisfaction must centre there; in effect, can any thing surpass the pleasure of loving and being beloved?

I shall not set down here my letter to the marquis; he has lost it, and it is impossible for me to give a right notion of it, as writing under the influence of a strong passion is widely different from what is related in cool blood. It must suffice to say, that it chiefly consisted in expressing my grief for the wounds he had received, and the danger he was in, with lively assurances of the tenderness of my affections. No expostulations; who could chide a lover, found to be constant, and known to be in danger of losing his life? The heart never takes

takes offence on such occasions; love possesses it entirely, and every thing else vanishes when that point is settled.

Two days after this, it being a festival of our Lady, finding I was able to go abroad, I resolved to fulfil a vow my good aunt had made for me in a church dedicated to her, and to make one myself to Heaven in behalf of the marquis. I heard mass, and being told there would be a sermon in the afternoon, I dined early and returned again. A capuchin preached with so much energy, that I was struck with it; besides that his discourse was smooth and elegant, and did not favour of the cowl; he seemed rather a gentleman recommending strict morals. My eyes were fixed upon the preacher: I thought I had seen him before, but I did not reflect upon it; I was so attentive to what he said, that I took little notice of any thing else.

In the conclusion of his third point, he treated of luxury, and irreverent behaviour during the mysteries. I know not how he came to cast his eyes towards me, but he had scarce looked upon me, when his speech failed him. He turned pale, strove against the fit that was seizing him, but in vain; he fainted away. Every one, frightened and surprized, was inquisitive about him in whispers. Of two persons who knew him, one rose to reach a phial to him who was assisting the sick man; the other, being asked the name of the religious, whom he said he knew, made answer, he was a person of quality, who had an extraordinary vocation, and told his family's name. Let any one judge of my surprize; it was the Chevalier D'Elbieux! Had I any reason to expect such an incident? I was so moved, that I had like to have undergone the same fate with Father Honoré, for so he was called in religion. Heaven was pleased to give me strength; but, apprehending I might not be mistress of myself, I took hold of my aunt's arm, and retired.

When I reached home, I could not but admire my strange destiny, that would not suffer one day to pass without some extraordinary event. In reality, was there any room for me to expect such a rencontre, who seldom went from home? This made such an impression on me, that, to prevent the like adventures for the future, I deter-

mined never to go to church but in a morning, and that so early, as to run no hazard of meeting any one I knew. But to what purpose are such precautions? There is no struggling against what is appointed.

The same day in the evening, the old marquis's gentleman made me a visit. The considerable part this man will bear in the conclusion of my history, makes it necessary to draw his character.

He was about fifty-five; his countenance agreeable, and, though not handsome, it pleased by reason of the regularity of his features; he was tall, well-made, with an air of grandeur in his behaviour. His character was to be complying and deceitful; ever of your opinion, in hopes of bringing you over to his own: in a word, a cunning, sly, dissembling man. When in the least desirous to please, he was sure to succeed; but never took the pains without a premeditated design of turning it to your prejudice. To this sketch must be added, his propensity to be envious and jealous; for whoever was agreeable to his master, was sure to have him for an enemy. Such was M. De Forfan.

Notwithstanding his ill qualities, which he knew how to disguise, he had gained the marquis's confidence so far, as to be consulted on all occasions. The traitor was always of his master's mind in appearance, but constantly had the dexterity only to agree with what he thought indifferent; as for what he apprehended would be contrary to his interests, he would artfully evade it; and when that was not to be done otherwise, he had recourse to calumny and the vilest measures, which seldom failed, as he was furnished with patience, skill, and contrivance; three qualities which carry a man through every thing.

From what has been said, one may easily imagine he was well apprized of his master's passion for me: far from dissuading him, he flattered his inclinations with every thing that could render them stronger and more bewitching. He thought me so mild, and was so fully persuaded that the meanness of my birth would give him the superiority over my interest, how great soever it might be, that he concluded he should be able to govern me, much more than I could his master. This was his mo-

tive for promoting the affair, and willingly undertaking the commission of waiting upon me, and sounding me concerning the passion with which I had inspired the old marquis, and which was come to that height, as he informed his gentleman, that he was determined to indulge it, and try how far I was disposed to comply. Forſan, who was ignorant that his maſter had more cunning than himſelf, and had particular reaſons for behaving in this manner, offered his ſervice, which was accepted of, becauſe the marquis, who had behaved with ſo much complaiſance hitherto, was doubtleſs unwilling to do any thing contradictory to that character.

Poor Forſan was far from gaining his ends. I took him up with ſo much reſolution when he diſcovered his errand, that he might eaſily ſee his project was not like to ſucceed. But he was not a man to be diſcouraged with the firſt rebuff; he returned the next day to the charge, and provoked me ſo much by his diſcourſe, that I loſt all patience. I reproached him with the baſeneſs of the commission he had undertaken, telling him with an air I had never dared aſſume before, that if ever he preſumed to trouble my lodgings again, I would find means to make him repent it.

After behaving in this manner, I expected to be freed from this enemy of quiet: but the day following he came as unconcerned as if nothing had happened. Perſuaded as I was, that his high ſpirit would not ſuffer him to return, I had not forbid Barbara to let him in. My colour came at the ſight of him, and I was upon the point of ſhutting myſelf up in my cloſet. 'Hold, Miſs,' ſaid he, 'I have but two words to ſay. You carry it with a high hand, imagining the marquis and I do not ſee through your artifice: but you are miſtaken, my child,' continued he, with a ſneer, 'he is not at all at a loſs in the affair any more than myſelf; it is your fault if we do not agree, you know our price. In the mean time, we are beholden to the virtuous airs you give yourſelf; they put us upon the enquiry, and diſcover the real truth. We know what you aim at, and will take care to diſappoint your chimerical deſigns. Farewel, Miſtreſs; improve the hint I have

'given you, that is all.' And then left me.

It may be imagined I was moved at theſe impertinencies, and gave way to vexation: no, my innocence made me perfectly eaſy. I apprehended, indeed, that I was not agreeable to the gentleman, and that his endeavours would not be wanting to ruin me with his maſter, by the falſe accuſations his malice could ſuggeſt. My lover had given his character long before, which afforded me an inſight into him. Without indulging ill-nature, I judged it proper to reſent his behaviour, and to employ the intereſt I knew I had with the old marquis, to free myſelf from ſo redoubtable an enemy, who would be a continual obſtacle in my way. Till now I had been a ſtranger to the motions of reſentment and indignation: they took up my thoughts ſufficiently to baniſh all other cares.

The firſt thing I did the next morning was to write Saint Fal word of what had paſſed between Forſan and me; not forgetting the impertinence with which he had treated me. I acquainted him likewiſe with my deſign of getting him removed, if his uncle did not ſuffer himſelf to be prejudiced againſt me. I concluded with deſiring he would uſe his endeavours to return as ſoon as poſſible, frankly owning, that from the time I was left to myſelf, my life had been one continued ſeries of croſſes and afflictions. This was the purport of my letter: as to my lover, he was not ſo much as mentioned.

I was going to ſeal the letter, when the old marquis entered the room. I was ſtruck at this unexpected viſit, and being ſurprized in writing, to that degree that I could ſcarce riſe to receive him; 'You are writing, without doubt, Jenny, to my ſon,' cried the marquis, ſomething harſhly, and ſnatching at the letter, which I ſecured in a great hurry; 'I am apt to think, by your endeavours to hide it from me, you have no mind to let me into your ſecrets.'

'I have it in my power, my lord,' answered I, 'to convince you of the contrary, by delivering up the ſubject of your ſuſpicions; but I may eaſily imagine it will be to no purpoſe, after the ill offices that have been done me, and the manner in which you have been pleaſed to treat me by your
'gentle-

‘gentleman.’—‘Do not let us confound things, pray Jenny,’ said the marquis, interrupting me, and a little out of countenance; ‘I desired M. Forfan to make a proposal of love to you for me: this was the extent of his commission. I do not deny, but I have received some informations concerning your conduct and designs; but my intention was to discourse the matter in an amicable way with you, but gave him no orders to say any thing on that subject. But this is foreign to the letter which you hide from me. If you satisfy me,’ said the marquis, something more politely, ‘as to that particular, it may be a means to engage me to do as much on my side. Few women are without lovers, and it would be surprizing if, handsome as you are, you should want one. The hazard you run in shewing me the letter, is my being acquainted with your intrigue. I promise secrecy in the affair, and must own I had much rather it were so, than to discover an understanding between you and a son, whom I would disown if I found he had disobeyed my commands.’

‘This is too much, my lord,’ cried I, shedding a torrent of tears: ‘you shall be satisfied, which will convince you I am not given to intriguing. My complaisance involves your nephew; but he will pardon me, because I am suspected: this is outrage upon outrage. See, my lord,’ continued I, giving the letter, ‘if to be sensible of ill usage is a crime with you, I shall appear very guilty.’ Saying this, I retired to my closet, to give full scope to my tears.

The marquis was too impatient in satisfying his curiosity, to trouble himself with any thing else; he had no sooner laid hold of the letter, but, clapping on his spectacles, he read it: either he was very slow, or he went over it several times.

‘May I not be deceived myself after all?’ cried he, not expecting he was overheard. ‘Have I not suffered myself to be prejudiced before I was aware? This girl’s conduct is natural enough; she was writing without any guile whilst I was absent; she did not expect to see me, and sure enough had no design of letting me see her letter: I must sift this matter to

‘the bottom.’ All this soliloquy I heard. People when in years are apt to do so. I conceived some hopes from it.

There was no occasion for counterfeiting grief, when the marquis came into the closet; it was real. ‘There is your letter, lovely Jenny,’ said he. ‘I am sorry I exacted such a compliance from you, and am more so for having given occasion to this affliction. Pardon me; I will strive to make amends, and before I stir, will give you entire satisfaction as to my suspicions, if they are without foundation. Dry up your tears, and let us talk over these matters like friends. I must own, that the dearer you are to me, the greater was my concern at what I heard; which was this. I was informed that you have a lover who is very dear to you, and possesses your favours; that your pretences to virtue serve only to set you off and disguise your passions; but that your chief reason for your affectation, is a project you have of making your fortune by marriage, and that my son is the person you intend to insnare, by reason of the passion you know he has for you. In all these suppositions, allowing them to be such, there are some truths. I am very sensible my son perfectly adores you, and that you make him a tender return, or at least appear so to do. His misfortune of being wounded, and the condition you was reduced to by the news of it, are sufficient proofs. These, Jenny, are my perplexities; you best can tell whether I am imposed on or not.’

I was eager to reply, notwithstanding my astonishment at such vile calumny, lest the marquis should imagine I was studying a justification. ‘I am more surprized than provoked,’ answered I, looking stedfastly on him, ‘at such base insinuations as are laid to my charge; my conduct thus far baffles all such accusations. In case I were really guilty, or disposed to give into such loose behaviour, as I am taxed with, my answer would be very succinct; for I should tell you, my lord, in three words, that I am not accountable to you for my actions, having friends whose protection would shelter me from any resentment of yours: but, as Heaven has been graciously pleased to guide me thus far in a blameless path, I shall always be ready

‘ ready to give satisfaction whenever my conduct is called in question.

‘ As to the last article, wherein you are most concerned, I value myself too much upon truth and sincerity to deny it. Yes, my lord, I was beloved by your son; and I own to you that he is dear, and ever will be so to me; this is my crime, and the source of all my misfortunes,’ continued I, in tears: ‘ without that fatal passion he inspired, my days had glided on in silent, but peaceful obscurity. Nevertheless, I was far from expecting the honour you mention as my due: I am not so partially forgetful of myself; but at the same time be assured, no other pretensions would have made any impression on me.’

I remained silent a moment; the marquis looked at me very pensively, and seemed to waver. ‘ You still suspect me, my lord,’ continued I, ‘ or are incensed at what I have owned: I know how to make every thing easy; and before this time to-morrow, you yourself shall acknowledge that I rather deserved your pity than your anger, and gave you no just occasion to treat me in so cruel a manner by M. De Forfan.’

The marquis, mortified with this, and without doubt amazed at the resolution I was taking, came and presented his hand. ‘ Let us,’ said he, ‘ lovingly Jenny, be reconciled; you are restored to my esteem, and I am persuaded you deserve it.’—‘ No, my lord,’ continued I very resolutely, ‘ your reconciliation is as tickle as your prejudice: I have a right to think so from your easy credulity against my innocence. After such usage, there is nothing left but a convent, where I will shut myself up for life; that can secure me.’—‘ Ah, I will never suffer it!’ cried the old nobleman: ‘ I have secret reasons for opposing such measures.’—‘ Without diving into your secret,’ replied I in the same tone, ‘ I must be so free as to assure you my resolution is unalterable, except on one condition.’—‘ What is it?’ replied the marquis, very earnestly. ‘ It is,’ continued I, ‘ to send for the author of these calumnies with which I am aspersed, and oblige him to give up my secret enemies, who have dared to blacken my character, and give him such groundless informations; for either he

‘ heard the stories, or has invented them: though I am apter to believe the one than the other, and earnestly desire to be set right.’

I appeared so resolute, that the old marquis yielded, apprehending the design I had threatened to put in execution: and, indeed, I was so weary of being every moment of late overwhelmed with vexation, that I thought of nothing but a convent for my relief; but the old marquis’s reasons for humouring me, obliged him to comply on this occasion. He sent a servant to bring his gentleman, and in the mean time behaved with so much politeness, and assured me in so handsome a manner I should for the future be entirely satisfied with his behaviour, that I gave him my word not to think of a convent, provided I was made easy by a thorough discussion of the affair in hand: but, in reality, this was more owing to the promise I had made Saint Fal, than any deference to him.

M. Forfan came; the marquis began with reprimanding him for his behaviour to me: during which time the wretch looked like a fury. When his master had done, he offered to whisper in his ear; to excuse himself, I suppose, or invent some plausible pretexts; but the marquis, without giving him the hearing, insisted upon his naming the authors of what he had alledged against me. Forfan turned pale at this; but his master persisting in his demand, he begged to be excused, for fear of involving those who, out of a motive of friendship, had given him the information: ‘ These reasons are detestable,’ cried the old nobleman in a passion: ‘ an accusation without proofs argues the accuser to be guilty; and I begin to believe, Forfan, you had your views in prejudicing me against this young lady.’—‘ No, indeed!’ replied the gentleman, expecting to be discharged if he did not clear himself. ‘ Why do not you speak, then?’ continued the marquis: ‘ have you less regard for me than those you are afraid to name?’ Forfan, being sensible he could evade the difficulty no longer, owned at last, that coming to my apartment, he met on the stair-case a person he had formerly known; that this young woman, upon enquiring his business, and finding it regarded me, shrugged up her shoulders; that imagining there was something extraordinary

nary in this, he asked what she meant; and that going to her apartment, he learned from her what he thought was his duty to reveal.

I was no longer surprized at the calumnies thrown upon me. Women of a certain character never pass over an affront. Junia, the person in question, was stung with the contempt I shewed her, of which mention was made before, and took this opportunity to asperse me to Forfan, whom she thought my admirer. I gave the old marquis an account of what had passed between us, and had occasioned the ill-will she betrayed in this cruel manner. 'I desire,' said I, 'this affair may be entirely cleared up.' And after relating the trick she put upon me, and her contrivance to gain her ends; 'We need only go up stairs,' said I, 'and see whether she dare deny one syllable of what I have said. At the worst, the clergyman I employed on that occasion will not be refused as an incompetent witness.' The marquis endeavoured to divert this resolution, by assuring me he was perfectly satisfied; but I was worked up to a pitch not to be dissuaded: and, to make me easy, the marquis sent in his own name to desire she would come down, telling me very politely that it was the least she could do, and that he did not think she was so much her own enemy as to refuse him. Forfan offered to carry the message, doubtless in order to prepare her; but his master ordered him to stay, and sent one of his pages. The gentlewoman, who had a respect for the marquis, and besides never dreamed of what was transacting, came with an air of assurance, as if nothing had been the matter. It is true, such women have foreheads of brass, and are not to be put out of countenance.

I was going to enter on the subject, and complain of her expressions to M. Forfan concerning me; but the marquis interrupted me very politely, and desired leave to explain himself. He entreated Junia in a few words to oblige him, by relating what had passed between her and Forfan; giving his word, that no use should be made of it, but that he had particular reasons to discover whether what he had heard was conformable to what she had said. The young gentlewoman, who knew the marquis was not to be put off, owned,

that by way of banter she had told Forfan, imagining he was in love with me, that he was like to lose his labour, for that I had an admirer of a rank far superior. The marquis enquired whom she meant. 'Your own self, my lord,' replied she very gallantly: 'we know you are no woman-hater; and that you often visit this lady was no secret, whence I concluded I was not mistaken. In a word, I did not think M. Forfan had been born yesterday; but, if he said any more than what I have repeated, he is an impostor and a villain. As for this lady, I ask her pardon: but she might have spared me this trouble.' Saying this, she made the marquis a genteel curtsy, and retired.

I dare say, the gentleman would have given all he was worth to have avoided this scene: he had such a mournful look, that I really pitied him. The old marquis eyed him from head to foot for some time without speaking a word; but it was easy to be discerned he was highly provoked. 'M. Forfan,' said he, 'you have abused the confidence I reposed in you: that I am convinced of this, you will easily believe. After such a proof of your deceit and malice, presume not ever to appear before me. Be gone!'

These last words were uttered so sternly, that the poor gentleman retired very submissively. Far from being pleased at the victory I had gained, I was sorry for being the occasion of his disgrace, and endeavoured to reinstate him in his master's favour, by suing for his pardon. 'No, Mademoiselle,' replied the marquis with some remains of emotion; 'I am easily imposed on once, but never a second time.'

When this storm was over, the marquis desired the favour of dining with me the next day, adding, he was obliged to leave me by business that could not be deferred; but the next day he dedicated to me, having affairs of the last consequence to communicate, which regarded us both. He used a thousand obliging expressions, and begged I would forget the uneasiness he had occasioned, assuring me he should shortly make me ample amends. I had so much reason to be satisfied with his behaviour, that I received his civilities with the complaisance due to them. The air with which I expressed myself

on the occasion, restored his usual cheerfulness; and it must be owned, that considering his years, he was exceedingly diverting. We parted very good friends, and sure enough I little thought of the troubles into which he was going to involve me.

The next day, Thursday, which I shall never forget as long as I live, Barbara waked me at six, to tell me that a man of about thirty, very indifferently dressed, and led like a blind man by a little boy of seven years old, desired to speak with me. 'Good God! dear Barbara,' cried I, 'could you not have told the troublesome fellow I was in bed, without disturbing me?' — 'Good lack!' cried Barbara, interrupting me, 'do you think I am a fool? Why, I bid him be gone about his business twenty times.' — 'So much the worse,' replied I; 'you should not affront people. Could you not have sent him away civilly, and put him off to a more convenient time? Perhaps he has something of moment to say to me: but since it is too late, let us say no more of it. Go, see what he would have, and tell him he must not expect to be admitted till I know his business.' My aunt left me, muttering something to herself; it was her custom whenever I reprimanded her. It is very commendable to behave with mildness to those who serve us; but too much familiarity must be equally avoided: they immediately resent the superiority which is really your due, and oblige you either to bear with their impertinence, or part with a good servant. I had often considered this; but I have mentioned my reasons for acting otherwise. She was my aunt after all, sooner or later she would find it out; and I was willing to behave in such a manner on that account, as to oblige her to own, that I carried myself as much like a niece as a mistress: this I had laid down as a rule, and was careful in observing it.

My good aunt returned dancing for joy. 'Good news, Madam!' said she, 'the gentleman was in the right to disturb you; he says, he brings you the best tidings your heart can wish, and that he is come to dry up the tears he knows you have shed, and continue daily to shed on his account. Look'e,' continued she, 'I was so pleased to hear him talk thus, that,

'if I durst, I would have taken him about the neck.'

What could I gather from all this? I imagined my aunt was gone distracted. 'Pray, what has this blind man,' cried I, 'to do with what you mention? What is his business with me?' — 'Faith, Madam, I cannot tell,' replied Barbara; 'I only repeat his words; you may be better informed, if you please; you need only give me leave to bring him hither.' — 'Do so,' continued I very uneasy; 'I don't know what to make of this affair.' I had no sooner said this, but Barbara left me, and in a moment the blind man and his boy appeared.

'Go on, child,' cried he as soon as he entered the room, 'that I may throw myself into her arms; go on. Where is she, my dear wife whom I have ever loved so tenderly, and who has died a thousand times at the report of my death? Why does she not prevent my tender embraces? Does not she see me yet? Is not this her chamber?' — 'Yes, indeed, papa,' replied the little boy, who had stopped on my making a sign to Barbara to send them away; 'we are now in our chamber, she is there, but I see plain enough she has no mind to know us.' — 'Hold your prating, saucy boy!' replied the blind man, shaking him by the shoulder he had hold of. 'Do not you see, sirrah, that too great joy renders this lovely spouse immovable? Heaven preserve her wits! Bring me immediately to her, who alone can recover her. After so long an absence, and the belief of my death, no wonder joy overwhelms her. If grief sometimes kills, pleasure as often destroys.'

The figure of the blind man, odd enough in itself, his arms swinging about like one feeling for something, and his strange discourse, all together appeared so ridiculous, that I burst into a fit of laughter. 'Hey-day!' cried he, 'what is the meaning of this? Am I made a laughing-stock, or am I mistaken? Am I not in the house of Madame Des Roches, who passes for an officer's widow?' — 'You are right sure enough,' cried my good aunt; 'nothing can be more certain.' — 'Why then this immoderate mirth?' continued the blind man. 'Am I forgotten, or not worth owning, because I

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‘ have the misfortune to lose my eye-sight, and am a little disfigured by it? Really, I could not have believed that a wife who has so great obligations to me, and from whom I have done so much, could make so ungrateful a return. Patience! we will see the end of it. In the mean time, without any ceremony, here I take up my quarters. Wherever my wife is, there is my home, and let me see who dare put me out.’

This conclusion was so far from provoking me, that it only made me laugh the more. In reality, nothing could be more whimsical than all this nonsense, and a formal design of taking possession of my house under so foolish a pretext. Barbara, whom I told in a whisper that I did not know the man, and that he was certainly mad, fell a laughing as heartily as myself; she imagined, that to free me from his impertinence, she need only take him by the arm and lead him out: but the furious blind man, provoked at her boldness, called her names, struck her with his cane, swearing like a trooper, and threatening, that if any one presumed to come within his reach, he would lay about him. My turn was next. ‘Hussy!’ cried he, speaking to me, ‘is this the reception you afford a husband, who has searched you so long, after being gratified in consideration of my services, and even turned my supposed death to your advantage? It is a crying shame, and gives room to suspect a gallant supplies my place; and that, apprehending my return should put a stop to your evil conduct, you pretend not to know me, in order to indulge yourself in an infamous course of life. But I would have you know, Madam, I have friends and right on my side, which will prove too hard for you, and afford me due vengeance, as your vile proceedings justly deserve. I am known, I may say respected; and if you are so much your own enemy, as to persist in this scandalous obstinacy, I will make you know in four and twenty hours, a husband like me is not to be trampled upon with impunity.’

The serious air with which these words were pronounced, and the good sense they contained, began to make me uneasy. ‘I am much concerned,’ Sir, said I, ‘at the ill-manners I

‘ have undesignedly been guilty of, not in regard of your person, but your discourse, which I do not comprehend. Your mistake is owing to the names agreeing together; but, I assure you, I am an utter stranger to you.’— ‘A stranger to me, perfidious woman!’ replied the officer very earnestly. ‘What, did I not take you from the wretched condition you was in, to make you what you are? Have I not had several children by you, of which this, the only one left, is as like you as he can stare? Go, you are an ungrateful creature, and the most deceitful of women. I ought not to have any thing to do with you for the future; and, if it was not for the pleasure of revenge, and to punish your wickedness, I would abandon you to your evil destiny.’

‘But, Sir,’ replied I, speaking in a very submissive manner, ‘keep your temper: do not expose yourself to the talk and laughter of the town. Inform yourself better, and you will perceive your error.’— ‘There is no bearing this!’ cried the exasperated blind man: ‘there is no bearing this! And since you persist in refusing to receive me for your husband, I will force you to it before I have done.’ ‘Would to Heaven I had never known you! If you have a mind, you may walk off,’ continued he. ‘Follow, since you are bent on it, your wretched way of life, I will not stir a step to hinder you; but, assure yourself, I shall make this my home, and all the devils in hell shall not drive me out. Alas, alas!—Here, child,’ added he, speaking to the little boy, ‘call up my man with the trunks, and then let him go to the cook’s shop for something to eat; I must not expect any thing here: after that I will send for a commissary; it is best to do things according to law.’

I was so confounded and perplexed with this odd scene, that I knew not what to say. Barbara cried, ‘What must we do?’ And really, to see me standing in amaze, any one would have concluded the blind man had really been my husband.

My pretended husband’s orders were punctually obeyed; the trunks were brought into my bed-chamber. A servant, whose whiskers terrified me, took out a night-gown, undressed his master, and,

and, receiving his orders in his ear, laid the cloth; but not finding the key in the beaufet, without any ceremony made the lock fly, took what he wanted, and in every thing behaved as if he had been at home. Let any one imagine what effect this must have, and whether I was unconcerned. But, to go on.

Barbara, frightened as well as I at the man's whiskers, and rough behaviour in forcing open the beaufet, began to call for help. Her cries awaked me out of the dumps, by making me reflect that she would draw a crowd, whose judgment would be formed on appearance and my supposed husband's pretensions: the decisions of the populace are seldom guided by any thing else, and generally favour the unfortunate. Daily experience shews, the crowd will shed tears for a man on the scaffold, whom they have cursed during his prosperity, and condemned without remorse.

After my pretended husband had made a hearty breakfast, and allayed some of his ill-humour as well as his appetite, he deputed the terrible Swifts to persuade me to comply without compulsion; to prevent, as he said, giving scandal. I had retired to my closet, and was considering how to disperse this cruel storm. I could not tell what reply to make the mediator, being so much terrified, that I was incapable of forming any resolution. In this extremity I told his frightful envoy, that his master might act as he thought fit; but that neither his threats nor interest should ever draw from me the foolish acknowledgment he required; that I could not imagine upon what grounds he had forged such pretensions, but did not doubt, in a few hours, to make him ashamed of them.

The Swifts, rolling his eyes very furiously at this answer, replied in his broken language, 'We'll see, we'll see, whether you'll pass this trick upon us. Mine Goth! mine Goth!' added he, by way of reflection, as he went out, 'how deceitful are women! Woe betide those who suffer themselves to be fooled by them!'

'Heavens!' cried I, after he was gone, 'what fate, what misfortunes pursue me! Was ever wretch thus overwhelmed! Sure such adventures are reserved for me alone!' Barbara came running to tell me the blind man was throwing things about, and rummaging every cor-

ner as if it was his own. I asked her what she advised me to do. 'To make your complaint,' answered she; 'to call in the neighbours, and demand justice.' The advice was not amiss where a person had no reasons to be concealed; but for me it was running too great a hazard. Vanity would not suffer me to declare who I was; besides, enquiry would be made why I changed my name. Not knowing, in fine, which way to turn myself, I heard the old marquis's coach stop at the door: I made no question but his presence and quality would relieve and free me from the terrible siege I underwent in my own house. I sent my aunt to acquaint him with what had happened, desiring he would come into the closet. The Swifts's whiskers carried too much terror for me to face, as I must have done had I gone to receive the marquis at the door.

He was much surprized at the relation, but could not forbear laughing at my perplexity. 'Really,' said he, 'the adventure is uncommon. Surely no one in his senses ever was guilty of such a piece of folly! Let me try to open the blind man's eyes, at least as to this affair, and see whether he will take my word.'

After informing me of his design to dissipate the storm, he went into my chamber, where my pretended husband was smoaking his pipe. He enquired whether it was true, that, without rhyme or reason, he had taken possession of a lady's apartment, whose rank was such as not to be insulted by any one.

The blind man, informed by his son what nobleman had entered the room, and judging it was him who spoke, answered with great respect, that he knew his distance too well to contest with the Marquis of L. V. but, at the same time, he believed him too equitable to condemn an unfortunate man unheard. 'Certainly,' replied the marquis; 'but if you will take my word, Sir, you may save yourself the trouble of proving what I know to be impossible. I have known the lady from her childhood; no circumstance of her life has escaped me; and am convinced she never was your wife, whatever you allege.'—'My lord,' cried the blind man, interrupting him, 'I find you are prejudiced; and, notwithstanding all I can say, will not change your opinion.'

‘nion. I shall not pretend to over-rule
 ‘ a person of your quality; but I am
 ‘ too well acquainted with the character
 ‘ of the Marquis of L. V. to appre-
 ‘ hend he will employ his power in ty-
 ‘ rannizing over an officer who has served
 ‘ his prince, as his melancholy wounds
 ‘ witness; and all this to support a wo-
 ‘ man whose behaviour shews her void
 ‘ of virtue and honour. Yours, my
 ‘ lord, will prevail with you to remain
 ‘ neuter in the dispute. Law and evi-
 ‘ dence must decide it: I beg you will
 ‘ permit me to have recourse to them,
 ‘ and in the mean time to remain where I
 ‘ know I ought to be master, and whence
 ‘ nobody shall drive me without paying
 ‘ dearly for it. I have the misfortune
 ‘ to be deprived of my eye-sight, but
 ‘ my heart is still good.’

The marquis was satisfied from what he heard, that I did not exaggerate the man’s obstinacy: he was so surprized, that he remained silent for some moments. It was doubtless in consideration of the name of officer, which the blind man took upon him, and which carries some respect, that the marquis did not proceed to extremities. ‘Is there no way, Sir,’ continued the marquis, ‘to compromise the matter for the present? In case you are really her husband she must comply: you will always have it in your choice to live with her; and it would be in vain to endeavour to prevent it, when once you have proved your title; but, till that is put beyond dispute, you cannot insist upon living with her, if she disclaims you for a husband. What I have to propose, and I think would be very proper, is, that you would accept of an apartment in my house till the affair be ended. I flatter myself, neither of you can object against this, nor do I see what you can do better on the occasion.’

The proposal seemed very reasonable; but we had to do with a headstrong man, who would not easily yield. ‘I am exceedingly concerned,’ replied he, ‘that my honour will not permit me to accept of your favourable proposal. I should injure myself very much, if I abated the least tittle of my pretensions: my wife is young and handsome; you take her part. This may occasion some talk that will not be agreeable to me; and I

‘am not in a humour—’ ‘Nay, this is too much,’ cried the marquis, provoked to find himself so unreasonably contradicted, and nettled at this fly insinuation. ‘Since you persist in not hearing reason,’ said the nobleman, very sternly, ‘you must be convinced that you are wrong. Fetch me a commissary; his presence, perhaps, may have more weight; and acquaint him I desire he will favour us with his company. We will see whether he will not take my word with regard to this lady.’ Saying this, he presented his hand, and led me into another room, telling me, with a smile, to make myself easy, and that I should soon be divorced from my pretended husband.

This odd affair opened a whole field of railery. ‘Had you been really married,’ said the marquis, ‘this would never have happened. Do not you think you would have been finely caught, if Madam Justice, who frequently blunders, should have condemned you to spend your days with this amiable blind man?’—‘Ah, my lord!’ cried I, interrupting him, ‘do not name it; I would sooner die than comply with such a sentence. Believe me, I have taken an aversion, I know not why, to the man; I mean such an aversion as I never experienced before.’—‘You would love him notwithstanding,’ replied the marquis, ‘if once he was adjudged to be your husband. Do not you know that marriage creates love?’—‘Perhaps so,’ replied I, laughing very heartily, ‘if such a whimsical union was in due form; but consider, if you please, that in living with this terrible officer, instead of being his wife, I should very innocently be his mistress, and the more to be pitied, inasmuch—’ ‘That would be the jest,’ cried the marquis, laughing excessively; ‘you would be his mistress; and, knowing that to be the case, you would be obliged by law to behave like a dutiful wife.’

A servant, who brought word the commissary was come, put an end to the conversation. Being introduced, he seemed surprized at the affair, and told the marquis very plainly, he could not take cognizance of it; that being an inferior magistrate, he could only proceed

proceed by way of representation, not by jurisdiction; terms I did not then understand. He added, that he could not employ force, unless it were in case of scandal or violence. Neither did he stop there; but said likewise, that nothing was more natural than for a husband to live with his wife, and that it would be very ridiculous for a commissary to turn a man out of his own house, unless it was proved as clear as light that he was an impostor; and that even then, he could not pretend to determine the affair, but only execute the orders of his superiors.

'That is as much as to say, Mr. Commissary,' cried the marquis, taking him up very short, 'that if this impostor should insist upon what his pretended wife cannot agree to, and appeals to you, you would refuse to act; but, while the affair remained in suspense, what would you have the lady do, if her persecutor would not be refused? Would you have her, though she be not his wife, obey an imaginary tie; and, in fine, comply?' — 'I do not say so neither,' replied the magistrate, in some confusion. 'I understand——' 'Very little,' replied the marquis. 'I see I must be at the trouble of going myself, to one who will teach you your duty on the like occasions, since you are at a loss what to do. In the mean time, Sir, I desire you will stay with the lady, to prevent any insult during my absence. I am going to Monsieur De —, and will be back instantly.'

The commissary was not a little surprised at the marquis's resolution, and manner of explaining himself; but still he persisted in his opinion, and told me that he saw no other expedient than for me to go to some friend's house till the affair was determined. This proposal provoked me so much, that I did not vouchsafe him any answer. I placed myself at the window, musing on my misfortunes till the marquis's return: any one will imagine I did not want for matter.

It seldom happens, but that in the midst of vexations some moments of comfort intervene. Such I esteemed a letter which was brought me from Melicourt. I should have been cruelly perplexed to have received it in the old marquis's presence, as the contents will shew.

'I Lose not a minute, Mademoiselle, in making you easy: the inclosed will explain itself better than any thing I can say, and I should blame myself for taking up a time so precious, by delaying the satisfaction I am persuaded you are going to receive. This night I set out, and at my return intend myself the honour of waiting on you with an account of my journey. I am, with the greatest respect, Mademoiselle,

'Your, &c.'

Let the reader imagine my transports. A letter from the young marquis! I opened it with great eagerness. It was as follows.

'NO words can express my gratitude, my lovely Jenny: how have I deserved the consideration you thus shew me? Could I even flatter myself with such a thought, after the cruel injustice I committed? Nothing less than Death ought to expiate my offence: if he withhold his hand, it is to spare a life you value, and give me an opportunity of receiving your pardon.

'The use I shall make of future days, as I owe them to you, will be no other than what will contribute to make you happy. I wait my recovery, and the end of the campaign, with impatience, that I may make you mine, and declare to my father I cannot live without you.

'THE MARQUIS OF L. V.

'Be under no concern for my wound; I am assured of a compleat cure in eight days. The joy of hearing from you was a sovereign balm, whose excellence still has it's effect. Melicourt, for whom I have a cordial affection, will acquaint you with my sentiments. Adieu, my charmer! though my weakness will not suffer me to explain myself more at large, my heart makes ample amends, and speaks a thousand times more than I write.

'From the camp of —.'

One moment's joy buries in oblivion all past sufferings. Mine was compleat, arising from the assurances my dear marquis gave me of his affections. At that instant

instant I vowed an unalterable passion and inviolable fidelity. It seemed as if the letter was sent expressly to support me against the violent attacks that were coming on. I stood on the brink of the greatest trial I could possibly undergo, and which would require all my resolution.

I was musing very agreeably on the happiness I had greater reason than ever to expect from these last assurances, when I heard the marquis's coach at the door: I made no doubt but that he came to free me from my pretended husband. I was not mistaken; he was followed by a person, with proper orders, who immediately notified them to the blind man. 'I find interest has been made,' cried he upon hearing them, 'and I must submit; but there are laws in force, and we'll see whether it is allowable in a perfidious woman to expel her husband.' Nobody making any answer, he hurried on his cloaths and retired, swearing that in a few hours I should hear from him again. The person intrusted with the orders to oblige him to withdraw, advised him in a polite manner not to carry things to an extremity, for that this was not a country to countenance violent means. The blind man only shook his head; and as he went out, charged his valet with the whisks to take notice of the house, that at his return there might be no mistake.

My deliverance from this man afforded me no small satisfaction. I must own he had occasioned a great deal of uneasiness, and without the seasonable relief I received, I must have abandoned my lodgings. This had been very hard; but there would have been no other remedy. The account I have given of the adventure shews he was not a man to be easily beat out of his quarters.

It was past dinner-time before I was mistress of my own apartment. The marquis very politely desired to dine with me; but my consternation had been so great, that I had not given any orders on that head. I went into the kitchen, and presently remedied my forgetfulness. At Paris, money provides a dinner in a moment, if one knows the method of it. But to return to the old marquis.

I found him so buried in thought, that he scarce saw me enter the room,

'Good God!' cried I, mimicking his pensive posture, which awakened him and made him smile, 'you are mightily taken up with yourself!'—'Not so much as you imagine,' replied he; 'I had called a council with my heart, and you presided. I have great designs in your behalf, Jenny, and you have it in your power to be one of the happiest of women; but sincerity, discretion, and secrecy are requisite. I read in your eyes an impatience to know my meaning. I shall not keep you long in suspense. Let us dine; after which we will strut ourselves up and discourse at leisure.' He changed his subject upon this, which made me imagine he designed to inform me by degrees of what might surprize me, and what, sure enough, I had no reason to expect; nevertheless, I am apt to think there was as much backwardness as policy in the delay. On some occasions, timorousness and shame guard the soul against deluding sentiments; severe reason employs such means in restraining it, and sometimes with success, from giving a loose to our appetites.

After dinner the marquis desired, that if any one came, I would give orders to say I was not at home, that we might not be interrupted. This precaution being taken, he drew near, and addressed me in the following words.

'If I were less convinced than I really am, my dearest Jenny, of your virtue, I should not have taken a resolution of the greatest consequence in life. But I am so well satisfied as to that particular, as to be determined to bestow upon you a rank and fortune far superior to your birth, and which you had no reason to expect; but that deficiency never occasioned a moment's hesitation, for I look upon birth but an introduction to the main business, our conduct in life; and when the former is distinguished, and our manners fall short of it's splendor, it only serves to render those more infamous; who, if I may be allowed the expression, fail to make good the engagements under which they entered this world. If such are my sentiments in regard of those, who being born to give great example, degenerate into a vicious conduct, I extol to the very heavens all such, who shaking off the dross of a mean extraction, adorn themselves with

with the rays of virtue, and shine bright in the paths of probity and honour. This is the nobility I adopt, and even prefer it to the royal majesty of crowned heads.

'In you, my dear Jenny, I have found this virtue, these sentiments, this honour, which I so much adore: I could not behold them united to so many charms, without desiring to be allied to them. I am sensible that custom runs against my maxims, and that among the nobility, mean alliances are seldom pardoned. I must expect to be pointed at, to have conjectures raised, and even, if I suffer my design to take air before it be past preventing, to be disappointed, and undergo not only remonstrances, but the interposition of a superior authority. Upon this account (and there is too much reason to apprehend it) I must employ secrecy to compass my aim. A little time will suffice for the execution. Provided we agree, we shall easily carry our point.

'I believe, after what I have said to you, my design is obvious. I am my own master, and accountable to nobody. An only son I have, who cherishes me as much as I love him. I deferred breaking my mind to you till I had founded him. I have his approbation. He tells me, my entrusting him with the affair occasioned the greatest transports. It is true, I did not name the person; but here is his letter: you know the hand; see whether his duty does not equal my tenderness.'

The marquis, taking a letter out of his pocket, the hand-writing of which I presently knew, gave it me to read. I opened it with great emotion, not being able as yet to divine the meaning of what I had heard. I flattered myself that it favoured my sentiments. The sequel will shew whether I was mistaken. The letter was as follows.

MY LORD,

I Received, with the greatest gratitude, the marks of the confidence you are pleased to repose in me; and though you had thought fit to have acted otherwise, I should have had the same respect for the person in whose favour you are determined. I sincerely share in the happiness you pro-

pose to yourself, and shall be overjoyed to be a witness of it. I am, with respect, my lord,

'Your, &c.'

This letter specified nothing, yet seemed to strengthen my prepossession. I fancied, with some reason, I was the chief person concerned. It will be evident that every circumstance contributed to lead me into a mistake.

Having read the letter, I returned it to the marquis, saying, there was no need of any such proofs to convince me of his son's respect for him. 'Excuse me,' replied the old nobleman, 'they may serve to shew you the regard I have for what belongs to me: however, as I perceive you do not entirely comprehend me, let me farther explain my good intentions; they tend to give you a rank in the world, and convince you how great a share you have in my esteem. But to prevent any mistake on your side, know, charming Jenny, that notwithstanding the reasons which opposed my inclinations, I have resolved with myself, you shall in a short time be Marchioness of L. V.'

These last words appeared to me so decisive, and conformable to what I had so long desired, that, penetrated with a grateful sense, I threw myself at the old marquis's feet. I was so surprized and astonished at a consent I had so little reason to expect, that I wanted words to express my acknowledgments. 'How well pleased am I, my dear child,' said the old marquis, taking me up, 'to discover, by the transport I have occasioned, that what I now do for you suits with your inclinations! I have long hesitated, I must own, before I declared my intentions. My mind misgave me, that your passion for my son might prove an obstacle, and that your heart would not easily comply with my desires: but I ought to have considered your discretion, and from thence assumed hopes of success. The less reason I had to expect so favourable a reception, the greater impression your manner of complying makes in my breast. For my part, I shall behave in such a manner, that you will own, though I have not youth on my side, I have complaisance and good-humour, far surpassing such a

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'frivolous advantage; for neither that, nor beauty, make a woman happy; it is the temper, it is good sense, that effect it, as every day's experience evinces.'

How it should be possible for me thus to remember what the marquis said on this occasion, I cannot conceive; for so overwhelmed as I was at what I heard, so confounded at his design of marrying me, and so terrified concerning what answer to make, that I could not utter a single word. To approve of his proposal, and dissemble my own inclinations, would only give him greater authority over me, and hasten my destiny: in refusing the honour for ill-concerted reasons, and not acknowledging my aversion, what risk did I not run? Doubtless, the nobleman must be greatly enamoured, to resolve on such an unequal match! Was it not natural to expect, after the advances he had made, that he would come to extremities, rather than be disappointed, and revenge a denial from so mean a person, too much honoured in the proposal? My troubled mind represented the behaviour of the son on this fatal occasion. Would not he be made accountable for my refusal? Might it not be also expected that, to punish both the lover and his mistress, he would take care to separate them so, as they should never see each other more? This thought determined my answer.

'You see, my lord, the confusion and perplexity I am in,' said I to the marquis, striving to command my countenance. Alas! who could avoid being so in my situation? 'Do I hear aright, or is it not an illusion? Shall a country girl, with no other recommendation than her virtue and a small share of beauty, marry a nobleman of your rank? Give me leave to call it in question; he understands himself too well——' 'I have already told you,' replied the old marquis, with some impatience, 'that virtue with me surpasses birth and fortune, and to that you must ascribe what I have determined in your favour. Why, then, should you doubt a thing, of which I give to evident a proof? You are not the only one, Jenny, whom Fortune has thus favoured, and will not be the last. Men of greater distinction than myself have furnished examples of it: but I have this advantage, I barely do jus-

tice to merit; a reason not only sufficient in itself, but warrantable to the world: whereas others, in breaking through received customs, have been influenced by their whims, or drawn in by their passions; neither of which are pardonable.'

Whatever I could alledge, was answered with so much strength of reason by the marquis, that it was impossible to maintain the evasion any longer which dissimulation suggested; happily he furnished me himself with a pretence, which I greedily caught at. It was necessary, as he proposed, to regulate matters, that the intended wedding should be kept private for some time. This he imagined not very feasible, by reason of the court's being so near, and his own numerous retinue: if it should be done at any of his seats, he had too large an acquaintance to prevent it's taking air. 'Suppose it should be deferred,' said I, very naturally, 'till the king takes some journey. Your employment obliges you to accompany the court, and all your servants must follow you of course: you may pretend urgent affairs call you to Paris, and bring away one trusty domestick: every thing shall be in readiness for the ceremony, which being over, you may instantly return, and appear at the levee as if nothing had happened. As to me, I shall continue in the same way of life as usual, till you judge proper to own your marriage. In acting thus, I do not apprehend you run any hazard, or is your secret liable to be discovered.'

The marquis thought my proposal so well concerted, that taking me in his arms, he applauded it. 'Your wit and good sense,' said he, 'are not inferior to your charms: my ardent vows are accomplished in such an invaluable acquisition.' Every thing that politeness could suggest was bestowed on me. The remaining part of the day was spent in ordering the future wedding. I came readily into every thing he proposed on that subject: finer projects, sure enough, were never laid out. We talked of nothing but rejoicings, equipages, and grandeur. He thought to please me by this pompous parade; but alas! how different were my thoughts! I devoured my sighs, and only waited an opportunity to give them full scope.

The chaise in which the marquis was

to return to Versailles being at the door, he took his leave of me with a deep sigh. 'How shall I suffer,' said he, 'during these eight days of absence, my charming Jenny! May I hope you will sometimes bestow a thought on one, in whose mind you are ever present?' I returned the best answer I was able to so many marks of his affection; and, as nothing is easier than to impose on a man in love, he went away fully contented.

The moment I was alone, I shut myself up in my closet; the business was to come to a resolution without loss of time. My ancient lover was too deeply smitten to wait long: I did not even dare to depend on the delay which reason had extorted from him. He might change his mind the next minute, carry me to one of his seats, and hazard a discovery to gratify his passion. When people of a certain age make a false step, they generally come to extremes.

I bethought myself of the pretence under which I had assisted my parents, and imagined it would afford me a safe and honourable retirement. Since my father and mother had not discovered me, it was highly probable strangers would not be quicker sighted: besides, my way of life should be so retired, as to prevent any troublesome adventure or discovery of my retreat. It was highly necessary to conceal such a step from the old marquis; for, after my flight was known, I must expect the utmost effects of his rage, as he would be justly exasperated to meet with such a return for all his favours and convincing proofs of his affection. From love to hatred is a common change, especially when attended with despair.

This place seemed fittest for my purpose, because our village was the last place in the world to search for me. I had been so long absent, and there were so many specious reasons against my returning thither, that I applauded myself a thousand times for making such a choice. Be that as it will, the design gave me great content, and I had no sooner formed it, but I thought of the means of putting it in execution. I concluded, that what I ought to do first, was to write the young marquis word of his father's design, my behaviour on the occasion, and the retirement I had chose. I told him, that in expectation of Heaven's appointing me some settlement, I was going to preserve a heart which ever

should be entirely his. I comforted him on occasion of our disappointments, and begged him to imitate my resolution in the vexations we might still meet with. In a word, I poured out my heart in this letter, whose length took up best part of the night. In writing to a person beloved, one never has said enough, and the time employed in it slips away insensibly.

I was so fatigued when I finished my epistle, that I was obliged to go to bed. I started several times out of my sleep, fancying the old marquis was come with a design to carry me into the country, and conclude the cruel marriage. My imagination was so disturbed, that it run on nothing else.

The first thing I did in the morning, after recommending myself and affairs to Heaven, was writing to Saint Fal: my obligation to him made it an indispensable duty. The contents of my letter were much the same with what I wrote to the marquis. Could I do less for so sincere and tender a friend? I was so happy a few days after as to give him some proofs of my friendship; but of that in it's proper place.

Just as Barbara returned from the post, two messengers, on very different errands, came to me. The first was from the old marquis, with a letter and a basket. The letter was filled with the strongest assurances of his tenderness, and the basket contained a rich toilette, with all it's appurtenances of gilt plate: in one of the squares I found five hundred louis-d'ors. But before I mention my sentiments concerning this rich present, I must say something of the second messenger.

A broad-shouldered man, with a sharp nose and a black wig, gave me a paper full of scrawls, which was all Hebrew to me. I desired him to read it. He said, not to trouble me with law-terms, it was a summons to appear before the judges there named, in order to acknowledge Monsieur Stephen Des Roches, &c. as my husband, or to prove the contrary; failing which, he was empowered to seize my person wherever he could find me. The time for appearing was three days after the date, at two in the afternoon, &c.

I was astonished at the blind man's obstinacy in persisting to have me for a wife. I told the tipstaff, I should act as I saw proper. Upon which he left

me, saying, that the plaintiff was in the right to lay claim to me, for I was well worth the costs of suit.

Another reason, any one may see, for leaving Paris, and which admitted of no delay. Accordingly I began the same day to pack up what I intended to carry with me, designing to leave the care of it to M. Melicourt, who had endeared himself to me by the late proof he gave me of his readiness to serve me, which I shall ever remember.

In two days I was prepared for my journey. I had a letter ready to inform him, at his arrival, where I was gone, and my motives for retiring. I begged of him to forward the things I had packed up, and direct them to Madame De Mainville. I had suffered too much already by the other name, to go by it any longer. I intended to surprize my aunt, to prevent any accident, and not acquaint her with the place to which I was going, lest her great joy should make any discoveries. In all steps of this nature, too much precaution cannot be used; and the best way is to keep one's own secrets, especially with regard to servants, who generally are not over discreet.

The preparations for my journey had fatigued me so very much, that I was going to bed when I heard some horse stop at the door. I looked out of the window, and found it was Melicourt. How much was I overjoyed, in the circumstances I was in, let any one judge. I ran to meet him. 'You could not have come,' said I, 'at a more seasonable time; a few hours later I had been gone.' He was much surprized at this, and enquired very earnestly what was my motive. But I was too impatient to hear what he had to say himself, to give him the satisfaction he required, and therefore begged he would yield to my importunity. The marquis was become so dear to me, that every thing else must give place. Melicourt smiled at my eagerness. 'He deserves it all,' said he: 'you have in him the phoenix of lovers; and he, on his side, owes his life to you. His case was desperate when I arrived. Hearing from you, drew him out of a deep melancholy, which, joined to his wounds, must have soon brought him to his grave; but, as soon as he was acquainted with the occasion of my journey, he appeared

'another man. Weak as he was, he would read your letter himself. What transports of joy did he not express upon the occasion!' 'M. Melicourt,' said he, 'how shall I shew you my gratitude for this singular piece of service? Do you know that the precious treasure you brought me has restored my life?—The charming creature!' cried he. 'What concern! what tenderness! what a revenge has she taken of my groundless suspicion, thus to give me convincing proofs of the sincerest affection! Such generous and endearing proceedings shall never be forgot. Acquaint her with this; and that, when recovered, nothing shall be left undone to compleat our mutual happiness.'

'The little time I remained with him, Mademoiselle,' continued Melicourt, 'his whole discourse ran upon nothing else. He designed to have dispatched Dubois to make you easy; but finding I intended to return immediately, he entrusted me with his commands, which I esteem a great honour; and the more pleased, as I am sensible I may depend on his interest, for which, Mademoiselle, I am beholden to you, and it is of too great consequence not to attach me for ever to your service.'

After we had discoursed, Melicourt and I, a long time concerning the marquis, I informed him of all that happened, and what I was forced to do. He approved of my conduct, adding, that when my lover knew the sacrifice I made to him he would be overjoyed. As to the old nobleman, I shewed his rich present to Melicourt, acquainting him with the perplexity I was in on that account, and my resolution of returning it. 'By no means,' cried Melicourt very hastily: 'if you will take my advice, you may employ it much better. The young marquis has commissioned me to take up money for him in Paris, his campaign having consumed all his ready money; and the remittances from his father not being sufficient, the greatest service you can do would be to supply him. Seize this occasion, which seems designed to give you an opportunity of obliging him with great delicacy.' Melicourt's proposal appeared so charming, that I embraced it very joyfully. Even if

‘ If I had not had the money by me, I would have sold every individual thing as a proof of my tenderness. I gave the five hundred louis-d’ors to Melicourt, who undertook to remit them to my lover; and, by the sale of my moveables, which were more than sufficient to make up the sum again. As to the toilette, I left it entire in a chest of drawers; and, after concerting with Melicourt, wrote the following letter to the old marquis, to let him know, that though I could not comply with what he required, I was not wanting in point of gratitude, nor undeserving of his favours by my behaviour.

‘ I Should be very ungrateful, my lord, if I retired without acquainting you of it, and my motives for so doing. Your title to the affections of a woman to whom you have thus behaved, is too clear to be disputed, as the honour of being yours is too great not to merit all the duty and love a wife can be capable of. After weighing with the greatest attention your proposals, I find my heart affords nothing more in your regard than respect and gratitude. But as this is not enough, nor is it in my power to go farther, I conclude the deficiency to be so great, that I am not worthy the honour of being your wife. With these sentiments I retire to expiate my misfortune, but shall ever be mindful of the obligations I have received. Excuse, therefore, my conduct on this occasion, as it is suitable to the probity on which I value myself, and the sentiments of respect and esteem with which I shall ever be, my lord,

‘ Your, &c.

‘ P. S. I received with very grateful sentiments the magnificent toilette you was pleased to bestow upon me. I durst not return it, for fear of disobliging you; neither did I think proper to carry it with me, considering the step I have taken: I have left it in the drawers belonging to my bed-chamber. The person in whose care I have left my affairs, will bring it to you, my lord, whenever you please to give your orders, with the money it contains. I repeat my protestations of respect and gratitude, and shall con-

‘ tinue to offer up my vows for your precious life.’

It was very lucky for me that Melicourt was returned; his assistance was very serviceable: so that in less than half a day, every thing was ready for my journey. We agreed, that he should remain in my apartment till the marquis and Saint Fal had answered my letters, that such as came in the mean time might be taken care of. Every thing being fixed, I set out the next day at four in the morning, after I had agreed with Melicourt that he should write from time to time an account of what passed in my absence.

Behold me once more a wandering fugitive, ignorant of what was to follow so many troubles I had undergone. All my past life presented itself to my imagination, and plunged me into deep thought. ‘ What, always thinking!’ said my good aunt, ‘ always melancholy! Must I never see an end of your afflictions? They must certainly be very great, not to allow you a moment’s respite. It is true, if you were really in want, or did not know where to go, I would not be angry with you; but, Heaven be praised! that is not your case. Far from running away in debt, you have left good effects behind you, which you may have again when you please. It is not so with me, Heaven knows!’ continued Barbara with a deep sigh; ‘ after twenty years service, what have I laid up? Heretofore, I was not in so good a place, indeed, as yours, where I want for nothing; but then, you must own, I pay dear enough in conscience for it, in the affection I have taken to you. Do not you believe, every time I see you in tears and affliction, I am vexed to the heart? and, indeed, how can it be otherwise, on such an occasion?’

‘ Things will mend,’ answered I very mildly, ‘ my friend; do not be cast down, the country air will make me cheerful.’—‘ Are we going to live in the country?’ cried Barbara, overjoyed. ‘ Heaven be praised! I shall be happy. What! see the fields, the sun rise; hear the lark and the nightingale, and spin at the door? What a blessing! And I shall hear no more the rattling of coaches, and all the hurly-

‘hurly-burly we leave behind us! After all, your Paris is a hell upon earth. To be shut up from morning till night, like a nun in a cloister; to be always in dread of thieves and rakes; to be hunched, or thrown down at every step one takes; or have the tiles or a chamber pot about one’s ears! Oh, Madam, I am quite transported! And when shall we get thither?’—‘To-morrow,’ answered I with a smile, knowing how she would rejoice, ‘we shall lie at your village.’

I had no sooner named the word, but Barbara shouted aloud. ‘At our village!’ cried she, ‘after which my bowels have so long yearned? Ah, my dear mistress,’ continued she, with tears of joy, ‘it was Heaven itself that put such a thought in your head; for you have pitched upon the most charming place on earth. Aye, your Paris, with all its finery, is not to be compared with it: there you will breathe wholesome fresh air; you will be a little queen among them. Lifelinks! how you will be admired! they will all crowd to see you, I warrant you. And how the curate will raise his voice at the preface, when you appear! for let me tell you, he is no clown, and keeps the best company; nay, in my time, they could not tell what to do without him at the castle.’

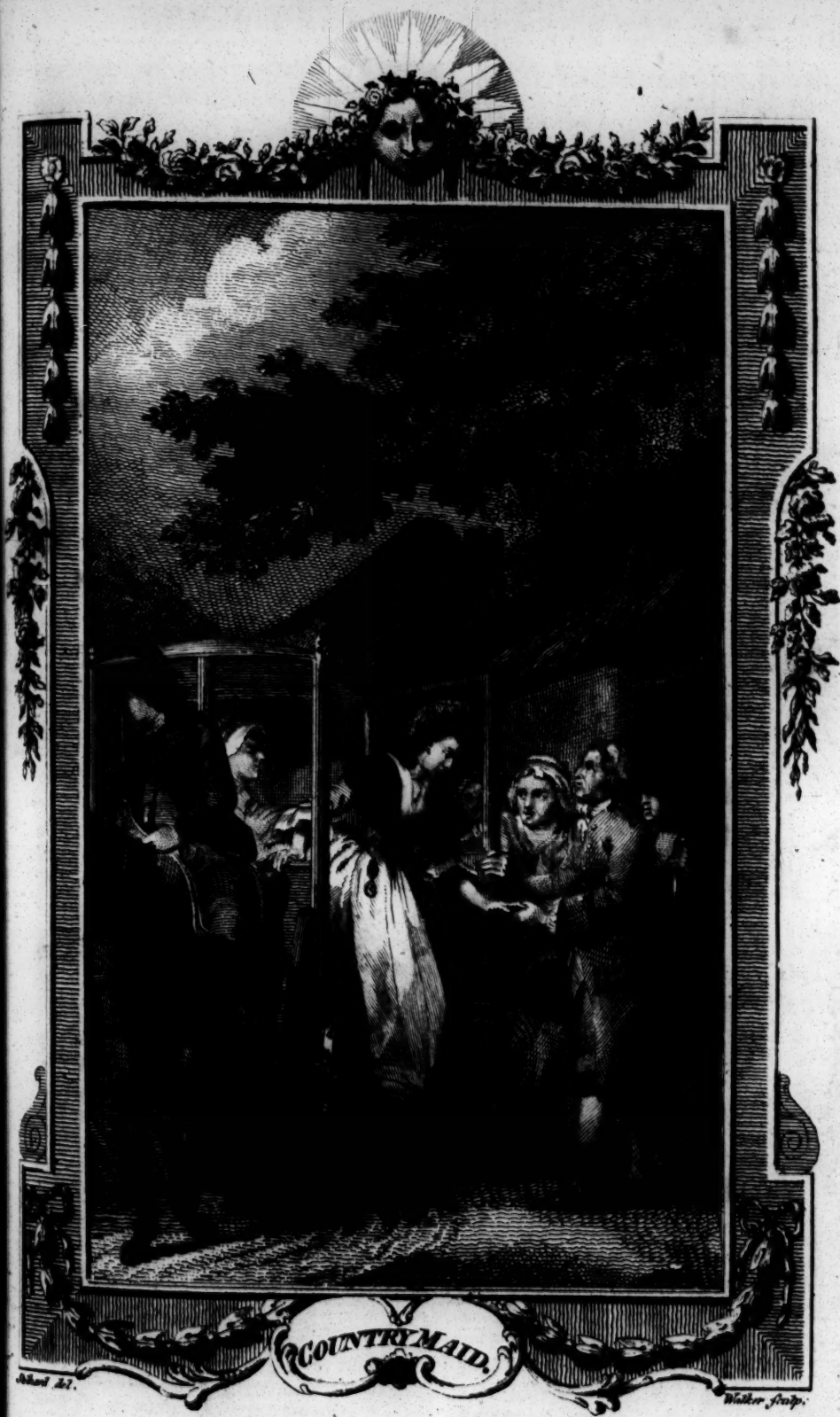
Barbara was so transported at this unlooked-for happiness, that she talked of nothing else all the journey. I would not send a messenger before, as I once intended, from the first day’s journey, because my father had wrote to Barbara a few days before I set out: he acquainted her that all my commissions were executed, and that I might come whenever I pleased; that my chamber was ready, well furnished, and every thing he hoped to my liking. This letter had greatly contributed to determine me in regard of the place. A certain indolence I had contracted, inclined to the side on which I found the least trouble, and I was pleased that care was over. Ease insensibly habituates us to laziness; which, when once indulged, costs very dear to be overcome.

The sight of our steeple created in me a secret joy, though attended with some uneasiness that I could not command. As for Barbara, she was in raptures. ‘There, Madam, there is

‘the dear village!’ said she, pointing to it. ‘The great house on the left, surrounded with those fine trees, is the castle, about a gun-shot from the village; we shall pass by the gates, and you will see a fine place where we dance on Sundays. That brook waters the garden; and the tops of the houses behind those high trees is where the village stands.’ Still as we advanced, my good aunt explained all the particulars as they occurred; and this with such an innocent satisfaction, that I envied her happiness, and would have given any thing to have shared with her.

Upon our entrance into the village, Barbara knew one of her neighbours who was spinning before her own door. She called to her aloud, begged the postilion to stop for a moment, made herself known, and asked a hundred questions all in a breath. The good country-woman, after recollecting Barbara, told her neighbour, who was folding some sheep; she told a third; and, as it was the time for the cattle to come home, every one was stirring, and in a trice we had half of the village about the chaise. I called to the postilion to go on to John B——’s; upon which, several girls, who were surprized to hear me name one of their neighbours, offered their service to shew the way, ran skipping along before the horses, and brought me in triumph to the house. But how little did it appear! How did the village, so much boasted of by Barbara, and which I had represented to myself so charming, now appear wretched and miserable! The tears came; and, in spite of reason’s force, I regretted the charming abode I had quitted. Childish prejudices were vanished; I was familiarized with grandeur: to advance is more agreeable than to go back. How shall I express myself! I was fool enough to be humbled at the meanness which surrounded me; and why? Because I was enamoured with ostentation! because I was vain! because my little knowledge of the world had infected me!

In the mean time, my father and mother, who were told of my arrival, came very joyfully to help me down out of the chaise. My agitation was so great; and my mind so troubled, that I did not hear a word of the obliging things they said. Going into the



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the house, my mother made a motion which frightened me, apprehending I was discovered. I learned afterwards, she was upon the point of taking me about the neck, my face made such an impression on her; because, being in an undress, I was less unlike what I had formerly been. But it went no farther than a fright, and I was conducted to my little apartment, consisting of a bed-chamber and a little room; the furniture plain, but new and convenient; and, with what was coming after me, I found myself very commodiously situated, and better than I deserved.

My father, who was transported with the honour he fancied I did him in lodging there, shewed me, that from my chamber I could go into a neat little garden under my windows: he told me, he had deferred laying the walks till my arrival, and that in eight days time I should have a parterre of flowers at the foot of the stairs. I thanked him for his civilities, and assured him I was overjoyed to lodge in his house; which, indeed, was very true. There was but one particular I dreaded; that was, being discovered sooner or later. I was now pretty safe as to my father and mother, and much more in regard of my sister: but Colin, the young fellow who had been so fond of me, could he behold me without being moved? The impressions Nature makes, though deep, daily experience shews that time will wear them out; but it is far otherwise with the ideas engraved in the heart by love: as the passion is stronger, the trace is deeper, and consequently outlasts the other; besides, Colin had seen me since I had left the village.

Nevertheless, I banished these fears: I was so much grown, and my features were now formed and quite altered, that I imagined nobody would know me; at least, I was willing to flatter myself so.

When I was in bed, I laid down a plan for my conduct, making it a rule to see no company, but to spend my time in working and reading. As to my table, I determined it should be plain, to avoid expence and shew, and not lie under the reproach of acting the lady in my father's house. I thought proper, indeed, to eat alone, apprehending too great familiarity might discover the secret, and as yet I did not

approve of being obliged to declare myself.

Some difficulty still remained; the marquis might return, and be desirous of discoursing with me. He had been seen there before, and his presence and visits might recal those ideas which were but too carefully laid up; all which put together, Jenny might be found to be one who was desirous to pass for somebody else. This I imagined might happen; and certainly had in a short time, but that the marquis apprehended the same thing. It will appear how he managed the affair: at present, something else demands our attention; every thing has it's proper place.

I passed the night better than I had reason to expect. In the morning, my mother bringing me some broth, which I ordered Barbara to make over night, told me, that the gentleman at the castle had sent to know who I was, and whether I made any stay in the village. She added, she had given no positive answer, not knowing what were my intentions.

I praised my mother's discretion, with an air that sufficiently shewed my satisfaction; but had like to have spoiled all by asking a question: I recollected myself, and only enquired who was lord of their village. 'He is a financier,' said she, 'an old batchelor; who, after the death of the last possessor, purchased it of his widow. He was once upon the point of marrying a daughter of mine, who now lives with a lady.' My mother was talking all this time of me, and was loth to speak her mind to my disadvantage; such acknowledgments grate too much. 'But the match was broke off,' continued she, 'because the intended bridegroom was engaged to another, who sent to forbid the marriage. From that time, the women are all afraid of him, though he is very rich, and he makes himself amends as often as he can; but his horrid figure and bad character frighten all our girls. He spends the autumn here; and during that time every one keeps watch and ward, for he is as wicked as he is ugly.'

This account resembled M. Gripart so very much, whom I have mentioned before, that I was not surprized to hear my mother name him. As she was in a talking mood, she related Madame D'Estival's

tival's history, much the same as what I have given before. She expressed herself much properer than my father, which made me relish it better from her than from him. The reader may judge; the sequel of that lady's history falls in too naturally here to be postponed.

SEQUEL OF MADAME D'ELBIEUX'S HISTORY.

IN the mean time, M. D'Estival, ignorant, as one may imagine, of his being by mistake concerned in what had passed the preceding night, came before dinner to the Countess De N——'s castle, determined on the answer he was to make to her proposals. One moment later, all would have been over; he had certainly found the door shut against him, and must have returned without comprehending the meaning of such a whimsical order. The countess, who thought she had reason to be highly provoked, was determined to have him forbid ever setting his foot again in her house; but, never dreaming of his being there before dinner, as he must have gone to bed so late, deferred giving her orders till she rose herself.

Let any one imagine her consternation, at seeing him enter her bed-chamber with that easy air which is the result of innocence. She was scarce able to command her resentment, and turned to the other side with a disdain which must have been discovered, had there been the least suspicion of what had given occasion to it. D'Estival, not aware of it, enquired after her health, and how she came to keep her bed so long. 'You have certainly supped late, been up all night,' said he, 'and now have got the head-ache; and, if I may judge by your looks, are not in a humour to chat.' This speech, far from engaging the countess to make any answer, only provoked her the more; nevertheless, she contained herself, out of a desire to know how far the impostor's impudence would go. 'The treacherous man,' said she to herself, 'after endeavouring to deceive the daughter, fancies the mother may be more easily imposed on, as she does not know what discoveries her daughter has made; and flatters himself, that though he is discarded by her, he may marry me. But why should

'I take his perfidy thus to heart? What is it to me, whether the wretch be privately married or not, or dares make his addresses to me? I know what I have to do, and should be guilty of a greater folly, if, instead of diverting myself at his expence, I should be serious in the matter, and only give myself uneasiness to no purpose.'

This reasonable reflection brought the countess to herself. Instead of carrying it with a high hand, as she once thought of doing, she pretended to wake out of her sleep, saying, she had not closed her eyes all night, and that it was very barbarous to disturb her. 'Indeed, M. D'Estival,' added she, 'you are to blame, and I ought to punish you, by taking another nap; but for this time I will pardon you, being impatient to hear what you have determined after our last conversation. Step into the next room while I rise, and then we will discourse as long as you please.'

D'Estival opposed this. 'You appear too much to advantage,' said he with a smile, 'in your bed, and are too charming for me to lose the pleasure of seeing you. Give me leave to sit down by you, and I shall declare my sentiments with the sincerity you exacted of me.'

The countess, too sensible to compliments, was half reconciled. 'You are always flattering one,' said she, in an affected tone; 'any one else would be deceived by your fine speeches: but it is lucky for me that I know myself, and am not fool enough to be imposed on. But to the resolution you say you have taken; that resolution I am so much interested, and so impatient to hear.'

'I have too lively a sense of all the civilities I have received,' replied D'Estival, very gravely, 'to hesitate a moment in sincerely declaring my mind: I am a stranger to deceit, and value myself too much on probity, to make a mystery of the passion I have for Mademoiselle D'Elbieux. This is saying enough, Madam; and, I think, I ought not to use an apology for assuring you I am ready, whenever you please, to marry your daughter, and receive her from your hand as a precious pledge of your esteem and friendship.'

This answer needed no explanation. That

'That is as much as to say,' replied the countess, ironically, 'you cruelly sacrifice yourself; and, to oblige me, will become the most wretched of mankind. This is doing a great deal for my sake; I know not how to make a return: but in an affair of this consequence, I must let the mother take place of the friend, and examine every thing very cautiously. I have been informed, Sir, that you are already married, and before any thing is concluded on, it is fit I should be fully satisfied on so material a point. If you will act with the probity for which you seem to value yourself, I shall avoid making an enquiry; which, though it turn out to your advantage, will throw a slur upon you, every man of honour ought to avoid.'

M.D'Estival, whose conscience did not accuse him, imagined either the countess bantered, or else resented the preference he gave her daughter. 'You are at liberty, Madam,' answered he, 'to act as you please. Whatever measures you take, I am sure they will prove my innocence. Every one knows me; I have nothing to reproach myself with, and defy the worst of my enemies.'—'This is going too far,' cried the countess, interrupting him: 'you may talk thus to others, who are less acquainted with you; but as for me, I am not so easily deceived.'—'Though you should take it ill,' replied D'Estival, with warmth, 'I must tell you, that whoever gave you any such information, are impostors, and I shall punish them as they deserve, if you will please to name them: the jest is something tart, and sure enough carried too far.'

The countess, fully persuaded that it was D'Estival whom she had heard reproached over night with his secret engagements, and which he had owned, was exasperated at his assurance in denying them. 'My daughter,' cried she, in a passion, 'can never be sufficiently praised for discarding you with scorn, since you stand so audaciously in a lye.'—'For Heaven's sake, Madam!' said D'Estival, interrupting her a third time, 'let us understand one another, and do not persist in such cruel treatment; if you are in jest, I will hold my tongue, and am willing you should give full scope to your bitter perplexing humour; but if you are

serious, it is time to come to an explanation. What is it you mean by pretending I am married? What secret engagement do you hint at? What grounds have you to imagine your daughter has discarded me with scorn? I would have you to know, Madam, with all due respect, that there is not one syllable of truth in all this; and that if you talk till to-morrow, I shall not comprehend one word you say.'

The more M.D'Estival persisted in asserting his innocence, the more the prejudiced countess's rage increased. Notwithstanding her resolution to keep in a bantering strain, she lost all patience. 'Is it possible,' said she, raising her voice, 'that you should carry, Sir, the imposture to this length? You dare maintain you are not married?'—'Yes, Madam, I do aver it,' replied D'Estival: 'who could have informed you of so base a calumny?'—'My daughter, if you must know,' replied the countess very warmly, not daring to own how she had discovered it. 'Mademoiselle D'Elbieux!' cried D'Estival: 'she could never have invented such a lye! I say again, Madam, you only divert yourself at my expence, and have some motive for so doing. I am satisfied you have invented this story, as an excuse for breaking your word with me; but you need not have taken the pains to proceed in this extraordinary manner: had you barely said you did not approve of me for a son-in-law, I should have come presently to a resolution, Madam, and given you no farther trouble.'

The conclusion of this answer touched the countess to the quick. 'There is no bearing this,' cried she, looking furiously at him; 'you provoke me beyond measure by your ill manners. Know, then, Sir, since you force me to it, that I was witness the last night of your conversation with my daughter in the Park; now sure you understand me. Will you deny, too, that my daughter wrote to you; that you agreed to meet her in the Park; that you and she talked of me in the most contemptible manner? Will you deny, too, your owning your marriage? But to what purpose do I give these proofs? I see in your looks you are contriving to evade them. Go, Sir, it is shameful for a man of your rank to lye so openly; I always thought

persons of distinction were exempt from this vice.'

'Nay, then!' cried D'Estival, lifting up his eyes to heaven; 'either I am run mad, or you have lost your senses! Pardon me, Madam, if my emotion has occasioned an expression I myself blame; but really any one else would lose all patience with you. I received a letter last night from your daughter! she met me in the Park! I speak respectfully of you; and, to compleat the fiction, frankly owned myself married, when there is no such thing, and she discard me without my knowing of it! Faith, Madam, once more, either you dream, or I am mad: certainly I have disturbed your sleep, and you are dreaming again; or you are resolved to provoke a man of some worth. Yes, I say it again, you certainly dream, and the devil himself cannot unriddle it.'

Mademoiselle D'Elbieux entered the room as D'Estival said this in a great heat. She did not know he was come, but was still persuaded he was the person she had talked with the night before; and was not much surprized to find him with her mother, after what she fancied she had discovered. Her malice, which was never backward, made her conclude that he had lain in the castle; and what confirmed her in it the more, was his angry discourse. She did not doubt but her mother and he, like too many married people, had quarrelled; and vexed to meet a man she detested upon the pretended discovery, she was going to retire and vent her ill-humour in her chamber; but the countess perceiving her, very peremptorily commanded her to stay, saying, her presence was necessary to clear up an affair she was acquainted with, and well deserved (added she with a sneer) the honour of her evidence and confirmation.

D'Estival, who was grown impatient, did not wait for the countess proceeding in her discourse. 'I am overjoyed,' Mademoiselle, said he, 'that you are come so luckily. Would you believe, your mother has spent an hour in endeavouring to persuade me that you wrote to me, and that in consequence of it, I met you last night in the Park; that under favour, we railed at her, and a thousand dreams of this nature? Speak, Mademoiselle, you can best decide it. It was in vain for me to as-

sure her that it is all a mistake: she persists in proving it to be true, and I am so astonished, that I shall not recover myself soon.'

Mademoiselle D'Elbieux was extremely surprized to hear that her mother was so well acquainted with her proceedings. She concluded the farmer's son had betrayed her, and was resolved to revenge herself sooner or later. Notwithstanding her anger against D'Estival, she approved of his persisting to deny the meeting, and thought it was her business to second him; which she did with so much earnestness, that it was rewarded with a box on each ear, for saying she knew nothing at all of it, and that it was contrary even to common sense.

The countess having thus revenged herself, ordered D'Estival very disdainfully to retire, and never come near her more. He rose from his seat, stung with the injurious treatment he had received. 'Yes, Madam,' cried he, 'you shall see me no more; but remember, and I repeat it before this young lady, that I never stirred from home last night, as all the people in the village can witness; I lay at my own house: that I had not the honour of meeting your daughter; that I never told her I was married; and, in fine, that the whole is a fiction. This is the plain truth, and so I wish you a good morrow; engaging my word of honour never to expose myself again to such opprobrious treatment as I have undergone this day.'

D'Estival went away, leaving the countess extremely perplexed at the imposture, of which she thought him guilty. Looking at her daughter, who cried for vexation; 'You are very impudent,' Miss, said she, 'to deny what I myself saw and heard.' Saying this, she threw the letter at her she had intercepted, as was mentioned before. 'Will you deny this too? I know you, perfidious creature! your wicked heart betrays itself every moment. You express yourself in my regard with great tenderness and affection, truly! Go, ungrateful child! you little deserve what I have done for you; and I should act very prudently, if, after discovering your malicious disposition, I secured you in a place that might prevent your behaving to me so cruelly hereafter.'

These

These reproaches were too just not to affect Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, wicked as she was: she cried very heartily, and confessed she deserved them, as she owned to her confidante, from whom this history was learned. Besides her other ill qualities, she was very unguarded, and had not sense enough to conceal what she ought to have buried in eternal oblivion.

As rash as Mademoiselle D'Elbieux was, she reflected a long time on what had happened, though it was not usual with her. Had there been the least room to doubt, she would have concluded that D'Estival was not the person she met in the Park: his denying having been there, and her mother's passionate manner of forbidding him the house, did not suit the notions she had imbibed. She was infinitely desirous of discoursing him on the points he had so obstinately denied; besides, it was sufficient to be ill used by her mother, to reconcile him to her, to say nothing of his being most in favour of all her lovers; and in the humour she then was, she heartily wished the engagements she fancied he was under with her mother were not of the nature she suspected, in order to receive his addresses anew, and even to marry him perhaps at last.

She was just sitting down to table with her mother, who still murmured and reprimanded her for what had happened, (for the best of mothers, when thus provoked, do not easily give over.) Dinner was serving up, when word was brought that M. D'Estourneaux was come. After reflecting on what had passed, he was concerned at having been so foolish as to give occasion to Mademoiselle D'Elbieux retiring, when his good fortune had procured him the meeting: apprehending besides, that jealousy might possibly have mortified her, he came to repair the mischief he had done himself; and in order that the acknowledgment he had made should not prejudice his pretensions to a person who, in marrying him, might retrieve his affairs, and make his fortune, he was resolved, in case she refused to hear him on account of his having said he was married, to pretend it was all a jest, and only to try whether she concerned herself in what regarded him. He had even taken the precaution, in case she should make any enquiry, to instruct his wife, and convince her, that it was her in-

terest to assist him on this occasion, in order to alleviate the extreme necessity to which her ill conduct had reduced her. This was what brought the vain-glorious D'Estourneaux to the castle, and occasioned various adventures.

Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, who had not digested the blows, nor the continual reflections she had undergone, received D'Estourneaux very coldly. On the contrary, the countess caressed him extremely, because she knew he was odious to D'Estival, as if she intended by such treatment to revenge herself for all the grievances she laid to his charge. The gentleman was so elevated at this, that he grew very jovial, and endeavoured, by his country jests, to reinstate himself in the favour of Mademoiselle D'Elbieux. The countess perceiving, by her daughter's sullen looks, that D'Estourneaux's company was disagreeable to her, took a malicious pleasure in leaving them alone. Accordingly, the moment she had dined, she retired to her closet under some pretext, but in reality to divert herself with the vexation this would occasion her daughter. When ill-nature is to be indulged, every thing that mortifies another is acceptable, though of the most trifling nature.

The spark was no sooner alone with the daughter, but he began his addresses and fine speeches, in order, if possible, to renew the preceding night's conversation; but he met with all the disdain she was capable of expressing when displeased. D'Estourneaux bore it tolerably well for some time; but finding nothing would please her, he began to think of justifying himself upon the subject of his unlucky acknowledgment, from which he imagined all this contempt proceeded. 'I see plainly, Mademoiselle,' cried he, 'that what I said last night about a pretended marriage, by way of banter, has made you uneasy, and occasioned the coldness with which I am treated; but do not be mistaken, I am under no engagement, as I am ready to prove: had you favoured me a few moments longer with your company, you would have found——' 'Are you run mad?' replied Mademoiselle D'Elbieux, very drily. 'Who told you that I concerned myself about you, or am any way interested whether you are at liberty or not? Neither do I com-

‘prehend what you mean by a discourse
‘you say we had together; I remember
‘nothing of it. You must explain your-
‘self; or, which would do much better,
‘Sir, give me no farther trouble: I am
‘not in a humour to be diverted with
‘your wit; and you had best reserve
‘it for others, who may possibly relish
‘it, though I do not.’

This made D’Estourneaux stare, and puzzled him in his turn. ‘I could not
‘have thought,’ answered he, ‘that you
‘would quarrel for a trifle, after giv-
‘ing me a meeting. I think——’ ‘I
‘give you a meeting!’ cried she, inter-
rupting him a second time, and sur-
prized at his assurance; ‘you are cer-
tainly distracted, or could never have
‘entertained such an extravagant no-
‘tion.’—‘I should think so too,’ re-
plied D’Estourneaux, incensed at this,
‘if I imagined all these things without
‘any foundation; but when you see
‘this letter, and which you cannot dis-
‘own, as I received it from you, I flat-
‘ter myself you will not persist in treat-
‘ing me as you have hitherto done.’

Saying this, he presented the letter to her, which created no small astonish-
ment. Casting her eyes upon it, she
fancied she knew the hand, and upon
that read it all over. It appeared to be
the same with the letter she wrote to
D’Estival, excepting as to the place of
meeting, and the writing being differ-
ent from her own. After weighing
with herself who could have possibly put
such a trick upon her, she recollected
what her mother had said to her, and
from thence concluded, it was her who
intercepted the letter, and had put it to
such an use: but, notwithstanding this
discovery, she was quite in the dark as
to the rest of the adventure. What
could be the design of sending the letter
to D’Estourneaux instead of D’Estival?
Why should her mother fall upon D’Esti-
val for the meeting, and he deny it
so strenuously? Had the cover of the
billet been preserved, it would have un-
riddled the whole; but it was never
read, D’Estourneaux having carelessly
thrown it into the fire; from whence
arose all the mystery, not to be unrid-
dled, and which so much perplexed Ma-
demoiselle D’Elbieux. Had the head-
strong thing given our country squire
the hearing, he would soon have clear-
ed up the point, and informed her, that
the letter was brought to him instead of

D’Estival; but she was too impetuous,
too lively, and too obstinate, to aban-
don her first notions, and consider cool-
ly upon any thing. A great deal of
wit, but little judgment, is the charac-
ter of Mademoiselle D’Elbieux, now
Madame D’Estival. However, resent-
ment must not be indulged; never any
good is to be expected from it.

The countess, who overheard every
word, soon found out the mystery. In-
stead of being concerned for her beha-
viour to the unfortunate D’Estival, she
thought the whole affair so very divert-
ing, when she recollected all that had
passed over night and the morning fol-
lowing, that she several times burst out
into loud fits of laughter. D’Estour-
neaux, who took it to himself, and ima-
gined his night-adventure was only a
contrivance to ridicule him, resented
her mirth, and rose from his seat, say-
ing she was very ill-mannered to make
a jest of a man of his importance. The
less merit a man has, the more suspi-
cious he is of being slighted. This
huffing speech was so far from check-
ing the countess, that it only increased
her mirth by being so ill-timed. Ma-
demoiselle D’Elbieux, who was asto-
nished to hear her, bit her lips for vex-
ation; thinking it was a consequence of
the trick she had been played, resolving
to revenge herself the first opportunity.

In the mean time D’Estourneaux,
whose resentment of the ill usage increas-
ed with it, began to think of convincing
the countess how much he was affronted,
by assuring her it was the last visit he
ever intended there. The countess, na-
turally polite, and, besides, apprehen-
sive lest D’Estourneaux in his anger
should divulge the adventure among the
neighbouring gentry, and prejudice her
daughter’s reputation, assured him he
was not concerned in the affair; but
that she could not help being diverted
at a trick she had put upon her daugh-
ter, and wherein he had never been en-
tangled, but by an unlucky mistake.
The fierce country squire was appeased
by this assurance, which his pride took
for an excuse. He grew good-humour-
ed, in order to pacify the countess for
his spiteful reflections, which she could
not forbear reproaching him with. He
told her, it was done on purpose, as a
punishment for her being there, which he
discovered, as he assured her, notwith-
standing she thought herself so well hid.

The countess believed what she pleased, but her daughter at last unravelled the whole mystery by what she heard, and was no longer surprized at D'Estival's peremptory behaviour. This renewed her former esteem for him, and convinced her, that all she had suspected to have passed between her mother and him was purely imaginary. Her passion revived, with a firm resolution of giving him the most convincing proofs as soon as possible.

An opportunity soon offered; the countess herself brought it about. She always had a value for M. D'Estival, and being sensible of the injustice of her behaviour to him, she thought herself obliged to acknowledge her fault, in order to bring him to the castle again, and convince him of her concern for what had passed. D'Estival, who had retired with great regret, was overjoyed at the pretence that was given him to return, without bringing his honour in question. Accordingly, he came the next day, and his short absence only served to render him the more amiable, and redouble the esteem he was in before the rupture.

The most inconsiderate have some intervals of good sense. Mademoiselle D'Elbieux behaved for a few days with so much temper, that D'Estival had the address to make her accept of his proposal to marry her. The countess, convinced of the necessity of marrying her daughter, especially after her late fall, and knowing how easily in such adventures a young creature might be ruined past retrieving, was resolved not to lose so favourable an opportunity. Her consent obtained, the nuptials were immediately celebrated, and nothing could be happier than the first few days that followed. The alteration in Mademoiselle D'Elbieux for the better was astonishing. The family blessed the occasion of so happy a change; but they were too precipitate in their sentiments: her character was still the same, and soon exerted itself with its usual violence.

They had not been married a fortnight, when one morning, as she was getting up, she bid her woman order the coach to be ready. D'Estival, in his complaisant way, asked her, if she proposed to dine abroad. 'No,' said she very coolly, 'I design for Paris; I am quite tired with the country, where

there is nothing new, and can bear it no longer.'—'You have too much sense,' replied D'Estival very mildly, 'to have taken so sudden a resolution without consulting your mother, and hearing her opinion.'—'Why, surely!' cried she very haughtily, 'am I such an infant, that I am obliged to ask her leave? I know of no such dependence, and will not be made a slave to any one. You are very impertinent to talk to me in this manner. Surely, the scene is very extraordinary!'—'What I said,' answered D'Estival, 'was not intended as an affront. You are certainly your own mistress, and I should be sorry to have given you the least occasion to think I would disoblige you; but I ought to put you in mind, that one of your birth should not leave her relations so very abruptly, and that——' 'All your reasoning,' cried she, interrupting him again, 'is in vain; I am determined to set out immediately for Paris, and nobody shall prevent it.'

'There is but one difficulty remains,' continued D'Estival, provoked with his wife's discourse; 'which is, where you can lodge when you come there? You know we have no house, nor have as yet had time to look out for one; besides, we agreed not to do any thing of that kind till next winter.'—'What is that to me,' replied the humourous creature with an air of disdain; 'do you imagine that will disappoint my journey? As if I could be at a loss for a lodging in dear Paris? Make yourself easy as to that particular: I have contrived the whole affair; and, Heaven be praised! do not want any one's direction how to behave on such an occasion.'

A neighbour coming in, put an end to the conversation. M. D'Estival was going to reply, and that like a husband who was determined not to yield to such extravagancies. The discourse at first ran upon indifferent matters, when on a sudden, without the least connection with what had been said, Madame D'Estival asked the lady, what she thought of a husband who tyrannized over his wife, and thwarted her in every thing. The lady, surprized at such a question, and guessing something was amiss, replied, that she did not believe that any married man was so unreasonable. 'Well, then,' cried Madame D'Estival,

val, looking scornfully at her husband, 'do not be any longer in such a mistake; that gentleman is one of the number. I have a mind to go to Paris; I asked his consent in an obliging manner, even begged it, and yet he is so cruel as to refuse me: Is not this playing the tyrant over a wife? I am so provoked, as scarce to be myself.' D'Estival, who little expected such a vile forgery, and was now convinced he had married the wickedest creature of her sex, seeing her worked up to such a pitch of extravagance, thought it most prudent to retire, and not give himself the trouble of making any answer. He went directly to the countess, but with an air of trouble which she presently discovered, and enquired what was the occasion of it: he very readily told her the whole affair. After shrugging up her shoulders, she promised to take proper methods. D'Estival was very willing she should stir in it, rather than himself; and, in order to avoid the noise he foresaw would ensue, he mounted a horse and went to dinner about a league from thence, hoping at his return to find his wife in a better humour, and possibly prevailed on to hear reason.

It was a difficult task, or rather an impossibility: the countess her mother was thanked very disdainfully for her advice, and told she was not mistress there, and that no deference was due to her. It was in vain to tell her daughter, that to go without her husband's consent, or to leave him behind, was equally monstrous. Her answer still was, she did not marry to become a slave, and that if other women were such fools as to be led by the nose, it was not her case; that she would shew, the rights of a wife were not inferior to those of a husband, and that there was nothing wanting but to know as much. In fine, words run high; it was to no purpose to interpose, go she would. A servant who had brought her up, was so indiscreet as to blame her conduct, and say she ought in conscience to obey her husband: this was answered with bidding her be gone. Accordingly, her wages were immediately paid; and, in spite of all remonstrances, she was turned out of doors.

The other servants hearing the old woman was discharged, who had brought her up from an infant, concluded they

must not delay executing what was ordered; thinking, that if the gover-nante, after so many years service, found no mercy, they could hope for none if they shewed the least repugnance to her commands. The coachman, who, by the countess's direction, had not as yet put the horses to the coach, hurried about it immediately; the waiting-woman thought of nothing but packing up, and in an instant every thing was ready.

Being informed of it, Madame D'Estival threw herself into the coach. It was in vain to endeavour to prevail on her; she returned no answer, but ordered the coachman to drive away. The whole family remained in the utmost consternation at her obstinacy, imagining this might not be the last freak with which she would try a worthy gentleman's patience.

The countess, thinking she ought to acquaint M. D'Estival with what had passed, dispatched one of her servants with a letter to him. He took horse immediately upon receiving it, much surprized to find his wife was gone without him, and should have shewn him so little regard as not to wait his return. The mother-in-law was too sensible of the justness of his resentment, to make any apology for such insufferable behaviour; on the contrary, she pitied him, and advised, rather as a friend than a mother, that he should take post instantly, endeavour to overtake her at night, and either prevail on her to hear reason, or to act as the occasion required.

This advice chimed too well with his own sentiments, provoked as he was, not to be followed. He sent for post-horses, and came up with her in about four hours. She was just entering a village, when she perceived him following her, at a time she little expected it.

The interview was really comical. Madame D'Estival, who easily guessed he did not come after her for nothing, resolved on as wicked a stratagem as could be invented. She pretended not to know him, desired he would go about his business, and, upon his assuming an air of authority, threatened him, that if he did not retire, and give her no farther disturbance, she would declare he came to offer violence, and that she would find means to be rid of him.

D'Estival,

D'Estival perceived that things must come to an extremity if he proceeded any farther: she was under a necessity of stopping in the village, having tired the horses so much, that it was impossible to go on without baiting. He kept back till his wife alighted at the inn where she was to dine, which she had no sooner done, but advancing to enter, he was stopped at the door, and asked what he would have. 'I am come to dine with my wife,' answered he in a passion. 'I did not think a man must have brought his pedigree,' continued he with a smile of disdain, 'in order to gain admittance here.'

The inn-keeper, who asked D'Estival such a ridiculous question, had just received his instructions from the wife. She had charged him not to suffer a madman to come in, who was in love with her, and so outrageous as to fancy himself married to her. Were ever such artifices employed to get rid of a husband? Such was the temper of the woman I am speaking of, and of whom I have such just reasons to complain.

As Madame D'Estival came in a handsome coach and six, with suitable attendants, she made no small figure: it was natural enough for her discourse to have it's desired effect. But as her husband came on a post-horse, and lived much in the country, it will be easily imagined he made no great appearance either in cloaths or any thing else. The inn-keeper took the lady's part, her equipage carried it, and M. D'Estival was not regarded.

The brute, as most of his profession are, was nettled at the answer mentioned above, and the more so, for that several who overheard it had laughed very heartily. He answered with some warmth, that a pedigree was not required for coming into his inn, but that nevertheless he had no room for madmen, who fancied themselves married to women they never saw before; that he should have no entrance there, since his design could be no other than to insult a lady, who did him the honour to come to his house; but that if he had the assurance to persist in his folly, he would let him see he was master there, and knew how to deal with insolent fellows and madmen.

D'Estival was highly provoked at this impertinence; and, losing all patience, drew his sword on the inn-keeper

to force a passage. The hostess bawled for help to the servants; and, in an instant, the whole village was in an uproar. Had D'Estival been Orlando Furioso himself, he must have yielded to the superiority of number. His sword was secured; and had not the curate interposed in the god-speed, the inn-keeper had certainly crippled him. The clergyman, by his presence, put a stop to their fury, and enquired what was the matter. D'Estival offered to speak; but the inn-keeper, fierce as a cock on his own dunghill, and whom the curate and the peasants respected for the sake of his heady stum, was very loud in his own defence. In fine, D'Estival was adjudged to be mad as a March hare, every one deposing something to prove his madness; and what was still worse, the curate would not hear any thing to the contrary. Accordingly, he pronounced sentence, that the madman should be locked up, an information taken of the assault, and be conducted to the next bailiwick, in order to be sent to a madhouse, or delivered to his relations, to be secured and prevented from the like pranks for the future.

Such was the decision of the curate and chief men of the village, who undertook to see it executed. It was in vain for D'Estival to endeavour to clear himself; the clowns were all prejudiced against him. Mine host of the White Cross had been attacked, which was proof strong enough in their judgment; and all D'Estival could say in his own defence was looked upon as the raving of a man distracted, who ought not to be laughed at, as they said to one another, out of humanity, but rather deserved to be pitied.

All this while Madame D'Estival stood laughing very heartily, which her attendants could not brook: one of them chose rather to be turned away, than not reprove her for what had happened. She was so provoked at his impertinence, that she forbid him her sight, threatening, that if ever he dared to talk of her, she would make him dearly repent his want of respect.

After this act of severity, she paid the inn-keeper well for his trouble, and proceeded on her journey. Instead of reflecting on her own base carriage to so worthy a husband as D'Estival, she diverted herself with it on the road, and
burst

burst in fits of laughter like a changeling, as often as she considered the astonishment he must be in at her artful manner of getting rid of him.

In the mean time, the servant, whom Madame D'Estival had discarded, no sooner saw her go away, but he ran to the curate to expostulate with him upon the injustice of his behaviour in regard of a gentleman, who was well known, and whose wife was certainly mad, and had never been thought otherwise even before her marriage, and then acquainted him with the whole affair. The clergyman, who was prejudiced, sent him away, saying he had talked with the lady (which was true enough) and that he thought her a woman of too much sense and distinction to be guilty of an action, which, if true, was certainly abominable. The honest servant, provoked at such proceedings, and astonished to see an innocent person so easily oppressed, thought he could not do better than return to the countess, and acquaint her with what had happened. She was terribly afflicted at the news, and set out the next morning, as soon as it was light, to procure the supposed madman's release.

The curate was much surprized at this visit: he repented, though something late, his own credulity, and begged a thousand pardons. M. D'Estival, more out of generosity than any other motive, forgave what was passed: had it not been for fear of exposing himself to the world, he would have carried things very far. But after thanking his mother-in-law for her concern, he swore he would never see her daughter more, or so much as hear her mentioned.

Would one imagine, after so cruel a prank as has been just now related, he could ever be so unwise as to break his word? Nevertheless, he did so. Madame D'Estival, who was at last brought to a sense of the folly she had been guilty of, resolved to use her utmost endeavours to obtain a reconciliation. The greater difficulty, the greater her earnestness, according to custom. She left nothing undone to compass it. She acknowledged her fault, laid the blame on her own giddy want of experience; and, in fine, she employed such powerful means, as procured her pardon. M. D'Estival received her without reproach; and, in hopes of reclaiming her by mildness, behaved as if he never had

any occasion to complain of her conduct; but he soon had reason to repent it.

Three months after this reconciliation, Madame D'Estival proved with child. The countess her mother, instead of rejoicing, was much concerned; being sensible, after much experience of her daughter's humour, that she would infallibly take that opportunity of tormenting not only her husband, but all those who had the misfortune to live under the same roof. M. D'Estival, who had no such apprehensions, was transported with the news; his love and tenderness redoubled. Ought so much goodness, so little deserved, to have been repaid with the vexations that hung over him?

What the countess apprehended came to pass. As soon as her daughter was certain of being with child, she affected a thousand whims, one upon another, which she was pleased to honour with the name of longings; and, out of complaisance, others did the same. Sometimes she could not bear the sight of such a servant, he must turn out; the next minute she would beat one of the maids, which she was obliged to take in good part: then she fancied something that could only be had at Paris; an express must be dispatched to fetch it. She tired every body, from morning to night; no one had a moment's rest, and yet durst not complain. M. D'Estival was the first to comply in every thing; and as he set the example, every one thought fit to follow.

There came one day to the castle a capuchin friar, whose long, venerable beard, drew the respect of all the world. Besides this great qualification, he was a man of wit, and did not much resemble the rest of his brethren. People were universally fond of his company: in a word, the greatest gossip in the neighbourhood. The countess, who kept an exceeding good table, (an excellent method of drawing company in the country) was frequently visited by the reverend Father Raphael. He came every week, and then it was high holiday; news without end: he understood the interest of princes, talked of war like a general, was a consummate statesman, embellished his stories with curious particulars; in fine, he was a rare country companion, and thought by every one so very extraordinary, that sooner or later

later he must certainly be a very great man.

I shall not pretend to draw a picture of this venerable person: all I shall say is, that his face much resembled a pale meteor; and that his nose for bigness and sharpness might dispute precedency with all the noses in the universe.

Madame D'Estival, who could not but be sufficiently acquainted with the reverend friar in so long a time, took it amiss that Father Raphael should wear so long a beard: she asked him very seriously, if he intended to wear it much longer. The capuchin, surprized at this question; as well as the rest of the company, answered very piously, that his life was in the hands of the Lord, who alone had a right to dispose of it. 'That is no answer,' replied Madame D'Estival with an air of uneasiness; 'I am talking of your venerable beard, and not of your death. I ask you, in plain terms, whether you are not tired of wearing it so many years, and whether you would not be glad, if any one were so charitable as to ease you of it?'

The capuchin, who was no stranger to Madame D'Estival's vagaries, trembled, as did all the company, at such a formidable question, as if what was going to happen had been foreseen. He answered, that he hoped to preserve it as long as he lived, and that he did not imagine any one would be so wickedly disposed, as to make an attempt on a virgin chin. 'And why not?' replied Madame D'Estival. 'Besides, where would be the great harm done, if you should lose your long beard? Would you be less what you are? No, certainly; and I am surprized at a man of your good sense should set your heart on such trifles.' Father Raphael was mortified to hear her still harping on his beard. What the lady had alledged diverted the company, especially the younger sort, who laughed immoderately: but he thought himself a man of too much consequence to be jested with. Notwithstanding, he stifled his resentment: he only begged of Madame D'Estival to change the discourse; and, without waiting for her answer, began a story of Alexander the Great's moderation in regard of the wife of Darius. But Madame D'Estival was not to be put off so: she inter-

rupted him, crying out, that Alexander's beard was far inferior to his, and that, before any farther mention was made of him, what she proposed concerning the long beard must be decided.

Father Raphael, who loved to hear himself talk, lost all patience at being interrupted on the score of his beloved beard: 'In the name of goodness, Madam,' cried he, 'let us hear no more of it, but permit me to proceed.' — 'No, no,' replied the mischievous Madame D'Estival, wringing her hands, 'you must grant me one request. You know I am with child, I long prodigiously, and if I am not immediately satisfied, I vow the child I go with will be born with as long a beard as your own.'

This conclusion was so diverting, as to set the table in a roar, and made the poor capuchin blush up to the ears. He was for rising from his chair, in order by his retreat to shew how much he was provoked: but those who sat next him prevented it, by holding him down, and telling him, ladies were allowed to say what they pleased without giving offence. M. D'Estival, who sat all this time upon thorns, nodded to him very obligingly, as much as to say, you know her humour, and should not be offended. Father Raphael took his seat again, hoping his beard might still remain a beard, and that the storm which threatened it would blow over. 'You make me no answer,' continued Madame D'Estival, taking a malicious pleasure in tormenting the good father; and the more so, for that, in her late quarrel with her husband, she knew the capuchin had been one of the first in advising him never to receive her again. 'Can you be so cruel,' said she, as to refuse me, after what I mentioned? — 'If it be only to handle my beard,' replied Father Raphael, 'I am willing to indulge you so far.' — 'You are exceeding good, dear father,' cried Madame D'Estival, rising from her seat with great alacrity; 'I have longed this hour for it prodigiously; your compliance with my desires gives me new life.'

I cannot say whether the tickling thoughts of being handled by a pretty woman made any impression or not; but this is certain, the reverend father resumed his usual gaiety, and presented

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his chin with no bad grace. The company, transported with this humorous scene, devoured with all their eyes both the physiognomy of the capuchin, looking mighty modestly on the fair lady as she drew near, and her arch countenance enlivened with sweet revenge. She was no sooner within arm's length, but she seized the beard as vigorously as if she did not intend to quit her hold on a sudden. 'O Lord!' cried the capuchin, softly, 'I beseech you, Madam; you tear the hair up by the roots: if you continue to make me gape so wide, all the owls about me will infallibly fly into my mouth.'

This piece of capuchin wit made the company very merry, though it was easily discerned to be pointed at the laughers; however, the sarcasm had this effect, they no longer pitied him, but applauded her who was bent upon making him blaspheme.

When Madame D'Estival found herself in possession of the venerable beard, with one hand she grasped as much as she could hold, and with the other began to nip off the longest hairs; and this with so much expedition, that Father Raphael, who imagined his whole beard was going, cried out bitterly, and springing up with all his strength, threw Madame D'Estival from him upon the floor. M. D'Estival, the countess, every one ran to her assistance, took her up, and enquired how she found herself. She cried and roared, protesting she should expire, and that nothing less than tearing off all the beard could satisfy her for the cruel treatment she had received.

Father Raphael, finding himself disengaged, and apprehending the consequences of her brutality, very prudently took to his heels. Any one else would have done the same, as it was certainly the wisest way, and the only means to escape farther mischief. Madame D'Estival no sooner perceived his flight, but she cried out against her husband, reproaching his want of tenderness. It was in vain for M. D'Estival to say he was sorry for what had happened, that he would make his complaints to the bishop, and she should be amply revenged; still she persisted in her exclamations, swearing he was privy to what the capuchin had done, and only wanted to have her dispatched at any rate. M. D'Estival, astonished to hear

her talk thus, expostulated with her on the injustice and consequence of her suspicions; but she remained inflexible: she vowed nothing should appease her, unless he would run after Father Raphael, and bring him back, or tear off his beard hair by hair; that if he brought it, without leaving any behind, she would believe he had no hand in what had passed. As desirous as M. D'Estival was of obliging his wife in the condition she was in, he could not prevail with himself to run after the capuchin, and much less to propose pulling his beard up by the roots; it could not be expected that, jealous as he seemed to be of that fatal beard, he would ever consent to part with it for all the big-bellied women in Christendom. M. D'Estival concluded, that on such a vexatious occasion, it was best to retire; which he did, sighing and complaining of his unhappy lot, which had tied him to such a wicked woman: he regretted his former moderate fortune; and vowed that, if ever Heaven should take pity of him, and set him once more at liberty, he would never be so great a fool as to expose himself again to the like misfortune.

What at first seemed only a comical accident and a matter of mirth, had like to have proved of very bad consequence. M. D'Estival being obliged to prosecute Father Raphael, to satisfy his wife, who insisted on having him punished, was very near being cast with the loss of all he was worth. The capuchins in every quarter of the world made themselves parties concerned: all the beards, not even those of the good old nuns excepted, were in commotion, and appeared in the common cause. Had not the affair been amicably adjusted, D'Estival would have repented as long as he lived the being an accomplice in so criminal an attempt, which was only pardoned in consideration of its being alledged, that his wife was frantick and big with child, which was admitted as an atonement for the affront offered to the beards of the whole body.

Some months after, Mademoiselle D'Estival was brought to bed of a boy, who nevertheless had no beard, though the contrary had been apprehended. Her husband comforted himself with this present from Heaven for all his past troubles. He hoped his wife would have more sense now she was become a mother,

mother, and give him no farther provocation to curse himself and her. But he was still mistaken; he was not yet at the end of his misery.

She was no sooner up, but nothing would serve her but being made a marchioness, cost what it would. She spoke about it to her husband, who represented to her very mildly, that as he had never been in the army, and his estate too small for such a title, she ought not to indulge such ambitious thoughts. Mademoiselle D'Estival took no such answer for current coin: she replied, that money would effect any thing; that she brought for her dowry large sums, and several estates in different provinces; that it was only selling all, and buying a marquise; in a word, that she was bent upon it, and would sooner die than not have her will.

This strange whim was occasioned by a young gentlewoman's lately marrying a count in those parts, which gave her precedence before Mademoiselle D'Estival. This giving place was a cruel mortification to her pride, which suggested to her, that in order to surpass the countess she must become marchioness. Was not this madness with a vengeance?

M. D'Estival acquainted her mother with this piece of folly; she agreed with the husband in condemning it, and resolving to disregard it. Mademoiselle D'Estival, upon being informed of this, broke out of all bounds in order to bring her husband to consent; but finding that it was all to no purpose, she stifled her resentment, and contrived a scheme to revenge herself on her husband, which had ended in his destruction, if fortune had not assisted him in parrying the blow.

Diverting his cares one day with hunting, he met with one of his peasants crossing the forest. Upon asking whither he was going; 'To carry a letter to town,' answered the clown, 'from your lady, which I am to put in the post without telling any body.' M. D'Estival was surprized at this, and suspected some mystery in the letter, into which he ought to examine. He asked for the letter, fully resolved to take it by force if it was not surrendered; but the simplicity of the peasant prevented his using violence. 'There it is, Sir,' answered he; 'but be sure do not

tell: she gave me something to drink, provided I went with the letter and did not acquaint you.'—'I will give you as much more,' replied D'Estival, 'on condition you do not let her know that I have the letter. Go to such a house to refresh, and then return to the village: if you are asked concerning your errand, say you have done it. Take care not to divulge what I have said to you. If I find you are discreet, and inform me when any thing of this nature happens again, I will remember you, and always give double what you have received.'

The peasant was well satisfied with his master's generosity, who was as much beloved for his goodness as his wife was detested for her malice. This it was which procured him the letters easily: so true it is, that the esteem we gain often contributes to our assistance when we have no reason to expect it.

M. D'Estival went aside and opened the letter. Had he not reason to tremble when he read as follows?

PARDON, my lord, the liberty an alarmed woman takes, in disturbing your precious moments for the sake of a beloved spouse. I am just now informed that M. D'Estival, that husband who is so truly dear to me, is on the point of leaving the kingdom, on account of a considerable employment which is offered him, and he has accepted of. I beg you will be pleased to interpose your authority, in order to prevent a misfortune I can never survive. One word of yours, my lord, will restore me to life. I am persuaded you will not refuse me this favour, as well as to believe me, with respect, &c.

D'Estival concluded from this letter, that his wife's design was to have him secured, to revenge herself for his not complying to make her a marchioness; and then, during his confinement, to try all methods of compassing her design. He thought it so base an action, that he came to a resolution, once for all, To this purpose he took post next day, without acquainting any one, and waited on the minister of state to prevent mischief, in case she should take another opportunity of writing to him. He laid open his grievances, begged

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his protection, and after convincing him of his detestation of all such projects, he sued for a separation in the parliament, and obtained it upon producing the letter; in a word, he carried his point: but, as he had been too easy in the marriage-articles, by acknowledging a larger dowry than he really received, to give the match a greater air in the family, for which the countess had reasons, and as all the relations on the father's side thought themselves obliged to support Madame D'Estival with their interest, she in her turn sued for a separation of estates, real and personal, alleging, that her husband was a gamester and a spendthrift, and would squander away what belonged to her and her son. To say no more, interest carried it; M. D'Estival was cast, and obliged to refund all he had received at marriage, and to give up his own estate, to make an end of the affair. He put the best face on it he could, obtained a post, chusing rather to live on his salary, than cohabit with a woman who, after such behaviour, might sooner or later come to extremities with him when she thought herself aggrieved, which was not seldom.

My mother concluded Madame D'Elbieux's history at this exploit, which I was the more inclined to believe, as I had a very bad opinion of her: prejudice made me credulous, as is usual in such cases.

The satisfaction I enjoyed once again in my mother's conversation, was too sensible not to be prolonged as much as possible; in order to this, I put her again upon the subject of the lord of their village. As it furnished her with an occasion of exposing him, no topic could be more agreeable: I had before discovered in her an aversion to him, and was curious to know the reason; she declared it without any manner of hesitation. The adventure is too comical to be omitted; if it should displease some readers, it cannot fail of diverting others: it is fit every one should find something to their taste; neither can the mind always relish a subject of too serious a nature.

M. Gripart fell in love with my sister, whom Colin had married, and who at that time lived with her husband in my

father's house. He sent for my father, and with a view of procuring himself admittance into his house, enquired if he would undertake the care of the castle gardens, as he had formerly done when they belonged to the Countess of N. my godmother. My father, who knew that employment to be more advantageous than labouring in the forest, and who had quitted it before on no other account, than for want of an opportunity of pursuing it, easily agreed with the new lord, and began the next day to carry his tools. From that time he daily repaired thither at five in the morning, and continued till eight o'clock at night.

As soon as M. Gripart had thus secured John B. who was not to be jested with in point of honour, he began his visits to my father's house under various pretexts. At first his designs were not suspected; he talked indifferently with mother and daughter: insensibly, however, he betrayed himself; and, as lord of the village, began to be more free than was becoming with Colin's wife. As she was truly virtuous, and perceived his intentions were to induce her to prove unfaithful to her husband, she answered him with disdain, and positively declared, that if he should ever presume to renew his solicitations, she would complain to her husband and the curate. Gripart, who was a mere coward, promised to behave himself with more discretion for the future, and begged that she would not betray him: but he was too much enamoured, and too foolish to keep his word. He contrived a scheme to compass his design without exposing himself, the success of which did not answer his hopes.

Once a week Colin went to a small town, the name of which I cannot at present recollect, to sell his corn. He usually was absent two days, and returned on the third. Monsieur Gripart thought this a favourable opportunity for executing his designs, which he attempted in the following manner.

In the evening after Colin was set out, he sent a peasant to my sister, in her husband's name, to desire her to come to a farm-house immediately, about two leagues from the town he designed for, where he was obliged to stay, having been let blood on account of a fall he had from his waggon, and that she must go with the corn, and sell it.

it for him. No sooner did this ill news reach my sister, but she instantly took horse, in company with the messenger, who was a neighbour, bribed by Gripart to decoy her.

It had been dark about two hours, when she reached the place where Gripart was waiting. This farm-house was nothing but a paltry inn, where waggoners used often to bait, and had but one square chamber, which Gripart had taken up. He was disguised like a peasant, that, in case of a disappointment, he might escape undiscovered. He invented a story to the mistress of the house, who was no wiser than she should be, that his wife's conduct had been for some time very suspicious; that, being unwilling to believe common report, lest it might be only the effect of people's malice, he was resolved to put her to the trial, and in that view had pretended to go a journey, in order to leave her at her own disposal, and had now sent for her, as from a gallant, who had been named to him. 'Now,' says Gripart to the hostess, 'if she comes, it will be a proof of her infidelity to me; and if she refuses, I know what to say when people come with the like stories again.'

The hostess approved mightily of his stratagem; and upon his acquainting her, that if his wife came, and he should discover himself, as he proposed to do, she might possibly cry out for fear of being beat, which he assured her was not his design, the good woman promised, that neither she nor her daughter would meddle or make; that she knew very well, that between the bark and the tree one must not thrust one's finger: he might therefore make himself easy; happen what would, she was not against his bringing his wife back to her duty.

These precautions being taken, Gripart thought the time long till my sister came. He did not doubt the success of his design; but forgot that Heaven does not favour wickedness, often sending disappointments not to be foreseen nor prevented. We have here a convincing proof of it, which gave a very different turn to the affair than what was expected.

Colin stopped to refresh at an ale-house some distance from the town, and there met with the commissaries employed in furnishing a magazine for the army. As they are always upon the

watch for the corn-waggons, in order to get better pennyworths, they proposed making a bargain with Colin for his wheat, and save him going into the town. Colin, who was willing to dispatch his business, told them, that at the market price it should be a bargain. The corn appeared so good, that the commissaries, after standing a little, agreed to give him his price, paid down the money, and the wheat was unloaded on the spot where they kept their magazine. After drinking together, Colin, instead of going any farther, returned homewards, deligning to bait by the way, and so travel all night, that he might reach his own village the next morning.

The fellow who drove the waggon, told him the horses were so tired that they must bait at the next inn; this was the house where Gripart waited for my sister. Colin, who was persuaded of the necessity for it, gave his consent.

Gripart, who counted every minute till my sister came, and heard the horses stop, shut the window again when he found himself mistaken. As his head run on nothing but gallantry, he did not observe that the horses were taken from the waggon, and put into the stable; from whence he might have concluded, that the men were in the house, and possibly might be a hindrance to his project.

In the mean time my sister, whose uneasiness was very great, and who imagined the messenger concealed the danger her husband was in, made all possible haste to come to him. Colin and his man were drinking by the fireside when she entered the inn. He was surprized to see her; but she, expecting to find him there, threw herself about his neck. 'How do you find yourself?' said she. 'You ought to keep your bed after such a fall, and not sit drinking here.'

Colin stared at this, not comprehending what she meant. 'Faith, wife,' said he, 'I am as much surprized at what you say, as at seeing you here. What has brought you hither? What do you mean by the fall you talk of?'—'Nay, pay,' cried my sister, 'this is a fine jest, indeed; why, do you imagine I only dreamed of your fall from the waggon, and that you was very much bruised, and sent for me hither? It is well John Bibart, the vine-dresser, who came for me in your name, is here.'

'here, and—' My sister, who thought nothing less than that the messenger was at her elbow, was going to call him for a witness, and looked about for him; but my gentleman, upon perceiving the husband, easily guessed he might possibly make but a bad market there, and very prudently made off, to take care of himself. Colin, as much a clown as he was, judged there was some mystery at the bottom of all this. He took his wife aside, to make some discovery; but she knew no more than her husband, and could only inform him what had brought her there, assuring him she had no other design; and as to any thing else, was as ignorant as himself.

My sister was handsome, Colin fond of her, and a little jealous; he could not be satisfied. 'There must be some snake in the grass,' said he to his wife; 'all this contrivance was never intended for nothing.' Take no notice, but sit down there. I'll go drink with our man, as if I did not know you. Nobody has seen us discourse together but neighbour Bibart, who can make no discoveries: so mum is your cue; the murder will out.' Colin was no fool; his plot succeeded.

Gripart, who was fallen asleep in waiting for my sister, never heard her arrive. His uneasiness made him wake, and look out of the window. But all being quiet, and finding by his watch it grew late, he began to think my sister had not swallowed the bait, and that he must take his labour for his pains. Be that as it will, he resolved to go to bed, being tired with waiting to no purpose, and called to have his bed made ready. The maid, who had been asleep in a chair, hearing the noise, went through the room where my sister was, to know what Gripart wanted. 'Is nobody come?' cried he; 'you know who I wait for.'—'Yes, yes,' answered the maid, 'our mistress has told the hostler and me privately, and has instructed me how to behave. I cannot tell for certain whether the woman below is the person; but she is all alone, though there are waggoners drinking in another corner.'—'Is she handsome?' replied Gripart, very eagerly. 'Did she come on horseback with a peasant?' The maid having answered these questions in the affirmative, Gripart bid her go down and send the woman up, but without any light.

'It shall be done,' replied the maid; 'but don't be too severe; all is not gospel which every one says.' Gripart, whose impatience was worked up to the highest pitch, promised to behave like a tender husband. The maid commended his moderation, and went to acquaint my sister in her ear to go up, and that the person she knew of was above.

My sister, who had agreed with her husband to take any hint that was given her, gave him his cue, and followed the maid. Colin, as soon as he thought her at the top of the stairs, took a light and followed her, accompanied by his man, each of them armed with a good cudgel. Gripart, who imagined himself on the point of gratifying his passion, and stood with open arms to receive his dear adorable, screamed out at the sight of her husband, and endeavoured to make his escape. Colin, who knew him, notwithstanding his disguise, but took care not to discover it, together with his man, belaboured him very heartily, pretending to take him for one of their equals, and crying out, 'What, Mr. Clown, is this your way of keeping the commandments?' It was in vain for Gripart to sue for mercy on his knees, he was rib-roasted according to his merits; nor did they desist, till they thought they had left him for dead.

This was the account my mother gave me of the lord of their village. She added, that this adventure had done him some good, and that he behaved since that time with more moderation. 'Notwithstanding, every one is on their guard; and it was upon account of his curiosity concerning you,' said she, 'that I have given you this character.' I thanked my mother for her good advice, and resolved to follow it, that I might avoid giving a man, I already knew but too well, any opportunity of tormenting me afresh: I had vexations enough, not to seek new ones, and could not behave with too much caution. The very thoughts of the old marquis made me tremble, and any one will believe it was not without reason.

The next day I received the goods which Melicourt sent me; and in the evening an express arrived from him, to caution me to be on my guard, and to see as little company as possible. He informed me, the marquis was out-
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rageous on the receipt of my letter; that he had dispatched so many people after me as must certainly find me out, and then he would make me repent the little regard I had shewn him after what he had done for me. Melicourt added, that the old marquis had endeavoured to win him, and learn from him where I was; that unless we had contrived a letter written to himself, and in the same nature with that to the old nobleman, he declared he should have been much perplexed; he was even obliged to dissemble, and condemn my conduct, to avoid being suspected; that this feint had gained his confidence: he seemed inclined, according to what he added, to write to his son, in order to find me out, imagining he must be privy to my designs, and the obstacle to his happiness.

As to the toilette, he informed me, that the marquis, notwithstanding his anger, was concerned I had not taken it with me, saying, he was very unhappy to be so little known to me; that he would not hear of selling my effects, to make up the money he had bestowed on me; and added, that since it was not possible for him to learn where I was, and to send them to me, he would order them to be secured for me.

In a word, from what Melicourt wrote, it was easy for me to conclude, that the old marquis's quarrel was only grounded on my giving him the slip, and that his passion was still the same. This gave me great uneasiness; it was a considerable rub in my way.

Nevertheless, the little furniture which came made no small noise in the village, and was thought much more considerable than it really deserved. It consisted of plate, coats, linen, and other moveables, in an elegant taste, and which had an air of grandeur. My father and mother could not express their admiration; and my aunt, who valued herself on the honour she imagined there was in belonging to me, told the neighbours, when they were talking of these things, that this was nothing to what I had at Paris.

Barbara, of whom I enquired from time to time what people said of me, very sincerely told me, that talking one evening with my mother about me, she said, the more she saw me, the more she thought me like that daughter I had heard mentioned, of whom they could

learn no tidings, but that I never resembled her so well as when I was undressed; and that upon my father's saying there was a remote likeness, but far from what she pretended, my mother had replied, she would convince him, by bringing him into my chamber before I was up, or when in a night-cap, as I often was on account of the heat.

I resolved to make a right use of this hint, and dress every morning, as I used to do at Paris, that by these means I might be more unlike myself, and dissipate such notions, lest they should gather strength, and make too deep an impression. Though I never had used paint before, I employed some red, to diminish a little of my paleness, or complexion, call it which you please, which brought me too near that fatal likeness. This expedient had it's desired effect; in four days the resemblance, which had given me so much uneasiness, was entirely forgot.

The Sunday following I went to mass. Barbara had acquainted me that every one would be there, and that as I did not stir out, all the the neighbours who had heard of me would certainly be at church to see me, and know whether I really deserved all that had been said of me.

Could I have dispensed with myself from hearing mass, I should have certainly done it: I apprehended the effects of chance, and not without reason, as the reader may remember. I had laid it down as a rule to take so much care, and out of a seeming modesty to cover my face so much, that it was impossible to have a full view of me: besides, I put on a rich gown; for, the finer my dress, the less I was liable to be suspected in case any one should take such notions into his head.

What Barbara had foretold was fully accomplished; the church was crowded, not only with the parishioners, but likewise with a great number of strangers. I went up to the benches for the women; which were immediately left, out of respect, by those who were already there. I would not suffer this, but obliged them to take their places. This behaviour, which was certainly right in me, drew the regards and praises of many; and I could hear them say, that I was no less courteous than fair. What cannot prejudice effect!

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Shall the difference of dress make an alteration in point of merit and esteem?

Mafs was going to begin, and I was on my knees to hear it and say my prayers, when a church warden came in M. Gripart's name to invite me to his chapel, and tell me he would not suffer me to be so inconveniently placed. My answer was, that my situation was very well, and I was obliged to him for his civility, but should stay there. This modest refusal gained me still more praises, which put me to the blush.

I was in hopes to have remained unmolested after this first embassy from M. Gripart, which had nothing extraordinary in it: seeing a woman well dressed in the croud, it was natural for him to take such an opportunity of shewing his breeding; but imagining my refusal proceeded from his not coming in person, he approached to make his excuses, presented his hand, and protested that, if I persisted in refusing to comply with his request, he, lord as he was, (which he took care to make me hear) would kneel down on the pavement by me.

The murmur which ensued made me judge, that to put an end to it I ought to comply. I rose, and followed him into his chapel, where I heard mafs, without making any answer to the fine things he said from time to time.

He acquitted himself very politely, as one may imagine, in doing the honours of the place. The beadle was reprimanded for offering the blessed bread first to him, and was told, that when ladies of my quality were present, the compliment must be paid to them. I received it with reserve from his hands, and made a short acknowledgment.

When mafs was done, the gallant M. Gripart offered his coach to carry me home; but I desired to be excused. As it was but a step to my father's, it would have been ridiculous not to have gone on foot. 'At least,' said he, 'you will do me the honour to see the castle. The gardens are well laid out; your landlord was the contriver. The girls of the village dance in the avenue, and may afford you some amusement.' I thanked him very civilly for his obliging proposal, and told him that, except church, I went no where. The curate, who joined us while we were talking, occasioned Gripart's get-

ting into his coach and driving off. I guessed there was some misunderstanding between them, and so it proved. The adventure I mentioned created a shyness; it had reached the curate's ears, whose vigilance and strict discipline made him observe very little ceremony with his betters, when their morals threatened the welfare of his flock. It were to be wished all the cloth behaved like him; it would be a check upon the great ones. Virtue ever creates respect and awe.

My father and mother, who, as I have said, valued themselves in having me for a lodger, were standing by me when the curate approached. He paid his compliments to me, and said, he was much edified by my behaviour in time of service: that he had been informed of it, and thought himself happy in the acquisition of so pious a parishioner. I answered in a very polite manner, little thinking what was to follow. He invited me, with an easy air, which was not displeasing, to dine with him, in company with my landlord and landlady; telling me, in order to prevail, that his niece desired so much to be acquainted with me, upon hearing my way of life, that she would give him no rest till he had effected it. My father and mother, who were doubtless in the plot, seconded his request: and he behaved so handsomely, that, notwithstanding my former resolutions, I was obliged to comply. The curate appeared highly satisfied; and the more so, as I had refused the same favour to the lord of the manor. We arrived at his house, talking of indifferent matters. His niece, who was about twenty-five, and rather agreeable than handsome, received me with a very engaging politeness.

The curate, the same person who was mentioned in the beginning of these Memoirs, had parts, and was well enough educated; but his curiosity was more than feminine. I was scarce arrived at the village, when he tried all possible methods of discovering who I was. Barbara underwent a rigorous examination, but he lost his labour. I had given her a caution, and expressed myself so positively, with threats of parting if ever she was guilty of the least indiscretion of that kind, that she could not be prevailed on by any means to betray her trust. The less light the curate

curate could gain in my affairs, the more eager he was in his pursuit; it was in this view, sure enough, that he invited me, as I easily discovered at the end of dinner.

It must be allowed he was very artful in his enquiries. 'I knew formerly, Madam,' said he to me, after discoursing on different subjects, 'one M. De Mainville, a man of distinction in the sea-service, and famous for his exploits: he is but lately dead. As I have heard, he married a beautiful wife, and your name agreeing with his, I have often thought you may possibly be his widow.' Saying this, the curate waited my answer, expecting I should give him some light into my history; but I was as cunning as he: I took the thing. My answer was, that I asked it as a favour, that he would never mention to me a spouse, whose memory, when revived, always threw me into a fit of melancholy, which often lasted for three months, making me insupportable to myself and every one else; that the apprehension of such discourse made me live-retired from the world; that I was sensible of my folly, but could not conquer it.

This agreed so well with what my aunt had said, when she was questioned about me, that the curate was sorry for his indiscretion, and made me many apologies: he endeavoured to change the discourse; but I appeared so dejected, and played the sorrowful widow so much to the life, that he was heartily vexed at his having disturbed the cheerful gaiety I was in before. It was absolutely necessary I should behave in this manner, otherwise I must every day have expected to be exposed to questions that were not easily answered. My reply had so good an effect, and was so universally spread abroad, that no farther enquiry was made about me. The first setting out in the world is all, and determines every thing.

We were rising from table, when my old admirer Colin and his wife came in. They had not as yet seen me, though they came every day to my father's. As I had from the beginning declared against seeing any company, my father nor mother had not presumed to introduce them, though they were desirous to comply with my sister's earnestness to see me, which was very great. This opportunity of my dining with the cu-

rate was not neglected: as they were intimate with him, under pretence of a visit, they satisfied their curiosity. My sister I thought very handsome, though a little sun-burnt. Colin put me to the blush; for, after looking earnestly at me, he cried out very bluntly, he had seen me before, and that he was acquainted with my features. 'That may be,' said I very gravely. So lachonick an answer, with my serious air, demolished poor Colin; and had not a glass or two of wine made him find his tongue again, we should have heard no more of him. A tone of voice, a single word, dashes the most familiar. I was pretty good at this.

The last peal for vespers having rung, I rose and took leave of the curate, thanking him for his civilities: he proposed my returning after church, and that they would think of some amusement. I told him I had letters to write, and could not possibly accept of the honour. He found it was not so easy a matter to govern me as he had imagined, and gave over all thoughts of becoming my confidant. When we chanced to meet, I behaved with great politeness, but that was all.

Next day his niece returned my visit. As she seemed much upon the reserve, and very discreet, I received her very courteously. Soon after, I invited her and her uncle to dinner: thus, being out of their debt, I eluded, under various pretexts, any farther meetings. It was evident I did not care for company; my way of life, as well as my person, was no longer a novelty: in a short time, my name was never mentioned.

I had been near a month at my father's without hearing of the marquis; this had thrown me into an uneasiness which was frequently attended with tears: when one morning my mother acquainted me, that a man just alighted from horseback desired to speak with me, saying he had letters to deliver. I trembled at hearing this, concluding he came from my lover: my heart told me I was not mistaken. I desired he might be brought to me, and retired to a closet next the garden, in order not to be interrupted, but to be at liberty to talk with the courier, in case he should have any thing to say. He immediately entered. Seeing it was not Dubois, as I expected, I received his packet without
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observing any thing particular but a large plaster on his forehead; which, as it was no very agreeable sight, made me look another way. 'You may go and rest yourself at the alehouse,' said I to the man, giving him a crown, 'and I will send for you when there is occasion. I believe it unnecessary,' added I, 'to caution you against saying any thing; the person you come from, to be sure, has instructed you how to behave.' The courier only made a bow, and retired.

I opened the packet the moment he left me. My surprize was very great when I found but this one line in the marquis's hand: 'The courier will tell you the rest.'—'Alas!' cried I, 'what means this? Where is the courier? Why did he go, if he has any thing to say to me?' I was just running out of the room to call him back, not comprehending the mystery, when I found him before me on his knees. 'What do I feel?' cried I a second time, throwing myself about the neck of this lovely courier: 'is it you, my dear marquis?' I could say no more; so dear and unexpected a sight overcame me. I was near swooning away with excess of joy.

The marquis was concerned for having thus surprized me: he begged a thousand pardons; but, alas! there was no occasion for it. I obliged him to sit down, and made an endearing apology in my turn for not knowing him. I could not forbear laughing, when I reflected on the reception I had given him: he laughed very heartily, and mimicked, though he could scarce contain himself, the grave air with which I gave him the crown to spend at the alehouse. 'But, raillery apart,' said I, 'let them think what they will, I will order something to be brought, that you may refresh, of which you must certainly stand in need.'

In reality, the marquis was so spent, that he accepted of my offer. He told me, I need be under no apprehensions for appearances, he having given himself out for my brother when he came to the house; and that as to his servants, who were at the public-house, they were so lately hired, that it could not be discovered who they belonged to. I was charmed with the marquis's prudence. I had so many things to mention in my letter, that I forgot to re-

mind him, he had been formerly seen at the village, and might possibly be known, and therefore ought to be on his guard. But his good sense supplied my deficiency; and, as every thing was safe, I indulged the pleasure arising from the sight of so dear and worthy a lover.

The notion that the plaster he had on his forehead was only an artifice for disguising himself, prevented my enquiring any thing concerning it: but presently recollecting the wound which had given me such uneasiness, I asked if it was healed. 'My surgeon still attends me,' answered he, 'and dresses it every day; but I am assured the danger is over.'—'How!' cried I, alarmed at what I heard, 'you are not perfectly recovered, and venture to ride post? Certainly, my lord, you are bent on destroying your life, and killing me with grief!'—'Make yourself easy, my charming Jenny,' replied the dear man, judging of the excess of my passion by my uneasiness; 'I find myself exceeding well within these few days; and the delightful pleasure of beholding you will complete my recovery. Be persuaded, that if I had been any longer debarred seeing such a lovely object, I must have sunk under it. My valier de chambre, who plainly saw that absence from you was the only obstacle to my recovery, first proposed the journey. Neither did I ride post, as you imagined, but came in my chaise, which is very easy, and with my own horses. That the journey was necessary for assisting the cure, was evident from the benefit I immediately received, and the effect it had on my wound. I am convinced, that in eight days more there will be nothing remaining but the scar; and, if you will suffer me to stay so long in the village, you shall see the experiment. Give me your consent, my dearest mistress,' added this amiable lover; 'by so endearing a condescension I shall be amply rewarded for all I have suffered since our parting. After so tedious a sacrifice to duty, may not love demand some regard?'

Alas! what could I object against such convincing proofs of his tenderness? Thus far I had lived in perpetual alarms, certainly I might be allowed some small respite. Had I been less acquainted

acquainted with the strict probity of my worthy admirer, perhaps I should not have agreed to so long a stay; but the confidence I reposed in his discretion took off all the difficulty. 'You have declared yourself my brother,' replied I, 'and as such you may continue here. I have experienced your love and your virtue, and accept of the precious moments you offer, being persuaded I shall never have the least reason to repent it.'—'Is there any room for a doubt on this occasion?' cried my lover, tenderly kissing my hand. 'Can you think I forget what is due to you? Ah, Jenny! the letter I wrote to thank you for the money you sent, ought to convince you how sensible I am of the delicacy of your behaviour: that moment, had I been able, I would have flown hither to shew my gratitude; and, had it been practicable, I would not have contented myself with words; I would not have trusted to fair protestations and vain letters, which speak the mind only by halves; but the greatness of my wound——' 'Hold, my lord,' cried I, much perplexed at what I heard; 'suppress an acknowledgment which is no way due to one who must be ever indebted to you; but satisfy me about this letter, which you say you wrote, and which I never received.'—'How is this?' replied the marquis with some emotion. 'Did not a servant of mine, whom I sent post, deliver to you a packet, with a picture inclosed?'—'No!' cried I, still more alarmed, 'your servant has betrayed you: for Melicourt, I know, is too exact not to have forwarded every thing that was directed to my lodging.'—'It was directed to him, that common friend to us both,' replied the marquis. 'There I sent it, in order that your place of retreat might remain a secret; and what you tell me, surprises as much as it alarms me. Let me send for my valet de chambre, that he may set out instantly for the army. The servant I speak of is employed in conducting my baggage; he should be brought hither, that I may know what he has done with my letter: there is some mystery in this affair, which I do not comprehend. I remember I was surprised, that M. De Melicourt sent back my express without a single

line; and particularly what the fellow said on that subject, that Melicourt, when he received the packet, was just going a journey, and told him he would write to me by the next post at his return. I was in daily expectation of hearing from him, and the disappointment of a letter, joined to the desire of seeing you, hastened my journey. This affair is of too great consequence to be neglected.'

Far from disapproving the marquis's proposal, I advised him to send another express to Melicourt, to desire he would enquire at the house where I had lodged, if any such packet had been left there. My lover approved of it, telling me to write a note, and it should soon be delivered. As I discovered some apprehensions concerning his attendants, he made me easy, by informing me, that they were such as might be trusted; adding, that he would not bring his favourite Dubois, lest, having a remarkable face, he should be known in the village, where he had conversed much when he used to be there; and, that he might not be out of place, he waited on Saint Fal, who wanted such a servant. This name made me blush, when I reflected on my ingratitude to so good a friend. I never thought of enquiring after him, taken up as I was with the pleasure of seeing the marquis again, and the concern occasioned by the loss of the letter. I acknowledged my injustice, frankly owning to my lover the real cause: but he confessed himself greatly obliged to me for it. He added, that his kinsman would shortly be exchanged, and regain his liberty. When the marquis had dispatched his expresses, I desired dinner to be brought up. It happened very luckily that the soup was good, and I obliged him to eat heartily. I would not suffer him to talk of any thing that might make him uneasy, and always interrupted him when he mentioned the old marquis. He was grown so pale, and was so much altered, that it drew tears from me. His wound, or rather the great patch upon it, covered one eye-brow, and gave him an air that was particular, but not disagreeable, as it had an assurance which takes with women. I had not as yet seen him with his hat on; but his wound obliging him not to be long uncovered, his look bespoke a certain boldness that charmed me even to admiration. He

smiled upon me from time to time, as I would not suffer him to speak, and his smiles had their peculiar graces. When he offered sometimes to kiss my hand, I pulled it away; but, in truth, it was more out of a habit of reservedness, than any fear; for when he happened to surprize me, I was not sorry. Why should I not own it? I should tell a lye in denying it, which I think more blameable than to indulge a virtuous lover in so innocent a way. I bar all commentaries; so, no more of that.

My lover was too dear to me, not to think of his repose. We had no sooner dined, but I insisted upon his going to lie down, protesting I would not see him again till supper-time. He begged hard for one hour; but I was inexorable, and told him, I would send Barbara to the inn, that I might be satisfied he complied with what I required. These little regards charmed him; and he declared, at taking his leave, that he was convinced he only now began to live.

When alone, I indulged myself in the most agreeable reflections. I was satisfied how greatly attached the marquis was to me, by what he had done; it was a convincing proof of the solidity of his passion; and could not forbear pleasing myself with the consequences which might naturally be expected from it. Had it not been for the letter which was either intercepted or lost, my joy would have been compleat; but, as I had hitherto experienced so many crosses, I might reasonably dread some storm would follow. This notion no sooner gained ground, but it insensibly dissipated the motions of satisfaction to which I abandoned myself. The impetuous love of the old marquis put the finishing stroke to my disquiet; and, after various reflections on all these things, I began to find I was still at a great distance from my wished-for point, and with which I had too easily flattered myself.

My head was full of all this, when I heard a coach and several horses stop at the door. I was frightened. 'Heavens!' cried I to myself, 'can I be so unfortunate that the old marquis should have discovered where I am, and is come to reprimand me! or perhaps some of the young marquis's servants have informed his father, that he is come here to see me!' I trembled:

such an equipage stopping at the door could regard nobody but myself, as it was impossible for any one else there to have such visitants. Barbara, who came and informed me of a beautiful young lady, as she expressed it, dissipated my fears. But, what joy when she entered, and I knew her! 'Is it you, my dear Saint Agnes?' cried I, embracing her: 'how much am I obliged to you for thus remembering me!' This lovely friend shewed how dear I was to her by her affectionate embraces. 'You are at liberty,' cried I, after we were seated, and our first transports something abated. 'I see an end of your troubles,' continued I: 'I am overjoyed.—' 'Heaven has at last removed the obstacles,' replied this lovely friend, 'which obstructed my happiness; but had not a severe sickness brought my father to death's door, I doubt whether or no, in spite of all Melicourt's hopes, I should ever have broke through my cruel bonds. Fresh obstacles, which they took care to inform me of in the convent, to punish me, I suppose, for being so desirous of leaving it, threatened me with being a prisoner for life: I even gathered as much from my husband's letter. In vain did he pretend to give me hopes; I discovered a confusion in his style, which overturned all he could alledge to comfort me: but Heaven, doubtless moved to compassion by my sufferings, provided a remedy whence I had least reason to expect it. My father, imagining he was going to give an account of his past life, upon recollecting his injustice to me, was startled: he thought he could not be expeditious enough in making amends, lest death should prevent him. An authentick declaration, signed by proper witnesses, acknowledging he had forced me, knowing I was married, to take the vows, finished the affair. In three days I was taken out of the convent, with leave to go and receive a dying father's blessing. My mother received me with tears of repentance: she introduced me, and I threw myself at my father's feet. The condition I found him in, not only made me forget all his cruelty; but, pierced with bitter grief, I offered to Heaven my ardent vows for his preservation, which was miraculously granted. He had scarce given me his blessing, when a fright-
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ful crisis, which at first was thought to be a redoublement of the fever, and the beginning of an agony, threw him into a sweat, which expelled the morbidick matter. In three days time he was entirely himself, and with tears acknowledged that he attributed his life to what he had done for me, and my return home.

'In a word, my dear friend,' continued Saint Agnes, 'my father is recovered, and designs to re-write me to my dear Melicourt. As he has affairs of the last consequence to finish at court, before my business can be concluded, he proposed carrying me along with him. My lover is still ignorant of all this, and I believe will be agreeably surprized.' I chided the lovely Minette for making Melicourt suffer so long on account of not hearing from her. Her excuse was, that during her father's illness she was so taken up, that she had no leisure. 'It is true,' added she, 'that since his recovery, to the day I set out, I might have answered his letters; but the tidings I carry myself are worth purchasing.' I had too much kindness for Melicourt to approve of her plot, which might give him great uneasiness: dear-bought experience made me compassionate; and she herself ought to have known what uncertainty is on such occasions. But Mademoiselle De —, whose heart was at ease, and who was naturally very gay, bantered my tenderness, and said she would acquaint her husband with it the next day, and would not for the world lose the pleasure of surprizing him with her presence.

I enquired of Mademoiselle De — where her father was, and why I had not the honour of seeing him. She informed me, that he had stopped about half a league off, at an old friend's, whom he had promised to call on, and that she had asked his leave to take that opportunity of seeing me more at leisure. I found likewise that Melicourt had acquainted her with my late adventures, and with the place to which I had retired: upon this, she had prevailed with her father to go out of the road, that she might give me proofs of her friendship, and communicate her good fortune, in which she knew I so truly shared.

When my lovely friend had acquainted me with all that had happened to her,

she desired me, with great earnestness, to relate my adventures from the time I left her in the monastery; saying, that the account she had received from Melicourt was very imperfect. This request was too convincing a proof how much she interested herself in my regard to be refused; accordingly, I gave her a full detail. 'Is it possible,' cried she, when I had done, 'that at your tender years you can have suffered so many disasters? Why, you can furnish out a romance. You have reason, my dear friend,' added she, 'to hope you are at the end of your troubles, and that you will one day be as happy as you have hitherto been unfortunate: my example ought to encourage you. Patience, and a just confidence in Heaven, surmount the greatest difficulties.'

After some reflections of the like nature, I enquired after the beautiful Lindamine. 'She has often enquired after you,' replied Mademoiselle De —, 'and is very much yours. She was far from happy at first: her devotion, with all its fervour, could still not entirely banish all thoughts of Belizai. She still loved him, as she owned, but with a passion so refined, that she besought Heaven to open his eyes, and give him grace to repent his past life. It seemed as if her vows were heard. The young man, by the Divine assistance, and the good example his fair mistress had set before him, quitted the world, and professed himself a Carthusian. Thence was completed our friend's happiness; from that moment, her days have flowed with uninterrupted peace and tranquillity of mind: taken up with the discharge of her duty, she knows no other pleasure. Her sweetness of temper and good sense endear her to the whole monastery, and every one glories in being of the number of her friends. It was with great regret I parted from her: whatever fate attends me, her memory will be always dear.'

Mademoiselle De — had scarce done speaking, when her father arrived. In consideration of my friend, I received him in the best manner. He seemed a man of sense, and one who had seen the world: his behaviour was politeness itself. I informed him how much I was concerned at my bad accommodations, designing to have had his company at supper.

supper. He replied, that though there had been conveniencies in the village for himself and attendants, he could not make any stay, pressed as he was for time, it being absolutely necessary to make all haste to court; adding, that his daughter's affairs admitted of no delay. This was a sufficient reason for my not insisting upon it. The lady and I parted with mutual protestations of friendship, promising each other an exact account of our several fortunes. Her father asked my commands for Versailles; but I only begged of him not to mention me on any account, giving him to understand that it was of the greatest consequence to me not to be remembered there. Both he and his daughter assured me I might be perfectly easy as to that particular, and that they were too much my friends not to behave as such on all occasions.

About an hour after they were gone came the marquis: he was dressed, and as it was on my account, it made an impression. His tenderness expressed itself in the liveliest terms, and discovered his impatience to be united to me for ever. 'My father's passion,' said he, 'is an invincible difficulty; neither do I see at present how it can be removed. Did you but appear to him as homely as you are charming, I should not be thus perplexed between love and duty. How shall I mention you to him, and assert my passion? Before he fell in love, he could only reproach me with my indiscretion, as he termed it: but now I am his rival and son; and, as the latter, will expect I should yield to him. Ah, Jenny, Jenny! what can be done? Advise me; for if you abandon me, overwhelmed as I am, you destroy a man whose life is devoted to you.'

What could I do but comfort so amiable a lover? I saw no expedient to cure the old marquis of his passion, much less to obtain his consent for his son's marrying. Had I listened to the dictates of a tender and well-expressed affection, I might have admitted of an expedient which has often succeeded; but it was such as I had determined never to employ. The marquis represented, that women of the first rank have recourse to it, and that by being secretly married we should be mutually armed against any engagements which might perhaps be proposed. 'Were you less

'acquainted with me, or had the least reason to suspect my honour, I should approve of the dislike you express of my proposal; but am I capable of deceiving you? Do you believe me so base?'—'No, my lord,' answered I, 'it is nothing of all this I dread; but to lose that interior peace I have ever enjoyed, even in my greatest misfortunes. The happiness of being yours, is too precious to be blended with tears and bitter remorse, and to run the risk of forfeiting of it. What ever happens,' added I, embracing his hand, 'you will be ever dear to me; and if I am not so fortunate as to be yours, I shall have the comfort of having contributed nothing to my own wretchedness;—no small consolation to a heart like mine!'

My lover was too reasonable and too obliging to insist any longer upon it; he assured me, that since I disapproved of his proposal, he would never mention it more. I made him a return for his complaisance by all the little innocent caresses possible. 'We must have patience,' he cried, charmed with my endearing behaviour: 'I will wait, my dear wife! provided you reserve for me that heart on which alone my happiness depends. Perhaps my father's passion may abate, and he desist from opposing what I so earnestly desire. At the worst, I want but two years of being at age, and then the law—' Ah, my lord!' cried I with as much quickness of thought as good sense, 'can you have recourse to methods, not uncommon indeed, but such as must render children ungrateful to their parents? Rather let wretched Jenny drag on her irksome days, than suffer one so dear to her to come to such odious extremities. Win over a father, who is only cruel in opposing your desires; and, by a thousand proofs of your respect, deserve to receive one day his consent. Such are the means I approve of for engaging parents to a compliance; all others are highly blameable, and inconsistent with the dictates of nature and reason.'

The marquis was so astonished at the greatness of my sentiments, uttered with an uncommon firmness of voice, that he looked at me with an air of the greatest respect. 'Indeed,' cried he, 'you surprize me. As to wit, discretion, and good sense, I have ever experienced

experienced them in you; but I could not have imagined that you brought into the world such noble sentiments; which, though opposite to my designs, I am compelled to admire and respect. The more you shew yourself worthy of the greatest rank, the more excusable both my father and I must appear. My own passion prevents me from being surprized that my father should be thus enamoured, and endeavour to secure the possession of so rich a treasure. I interrupted the marquis; he soothed my vanity too much: I besought him to forbear; protesting, my only ambition was to please him, and deserve his love as long as I lived.

The marquis was going to reply, when the servant he had dispatched to Paris entered with a letter from Melicourt. We were surprized to see him again so soon; he could never have been at Paris; and both the marquis and I were at a loss what to think. Our surprise increased when he told us he met Melicourt on the road, who was coming to meet his mistress; one of her father's servants, with a view of being well rewarded, had acquainted him with the good news. Our friend informed us, that he had been exceeding exact in taking an account of all that came to the lodging in his absence, both out of respect to me, as well as in regard of his own affairs, which were of too great consequence to admit of the least neglect. He added, if he might venture to give his opinion, the servant we mentioned had betrayed his trust; which he thought the more likely, because the old marquis, provoked as he was by my flight, and so desperately in love as he appeared, had doubtless used all means possible to discover me, in order to pursue his amour.

This answer overwhelmed us with fresh alarms. 'If it be true, as it is but too likely,' said the marquis, 'my father is acquainted with my journey; and, what is still worse, it will be imprudent in me to stay any longer here, for fear he should suspect where I am.' I was of the same opinion, as it was natural to think the traitor would not do his business by halves.

This news made us very melancholy all that evening; but it was nothing to what followed. The third day came the marquis's secretary, whom he had sent

to meet his equipage, in order to bring with him the servant in question. As soon as he appeared, his master expressed a great surprize at his sudden return; knowing, as he said, that his equipage must be at least fourscore leagues from Paris, and that it was impossible for him to go and come in so short a time. The secretary replied, that it was needless to take that trouble; that about thirty leagues distance he found the servant at an inn, who, as soon as he was discovered, took horse; but, as this bespoke a consciousness of guilt, the secretary pursued him till he took shelter in a wood. Upon this, finding it to no purpose to follow him, he thought proper to enquire what had brought him to the inn where he found him. The secretary was told, that the man was but just come when he arrived. He concluded his relation with saying, that he was informed that the runaway had enquired what road a chaise had taken, attended by three servants, which he said he had missed. The secretary easily gathered from hence, that the servant's enquiry tended to discover which way his master was gone; and, by going from village to village, to learn where he stopped.

My lover no longer doubted, after this second piece of treachery, but that his father was in possession of his letter, and acquainted with his journey, and his views in undertaking it. We guessed besides, that the villain had sent an express to the old marquis, to inform him of his son's departure; and that the father had ordered the young marquis to be pursued, in order to know where he went, judging rightly, it was the only means of discovering where I lay concealed.

It followed from the servant's flight, when found out by the secretary, that he did not know where his master was, and that the fear of being punished would deter him from making any farther enquiry. This thought afforded some comfort.

After mature reflections on all that had passed, the question was how to behave in such ticklish circumstances. The marquis was for my going to Paris, where I might be better concealed; but I would not hear of this good advice, fearing new troubles; at all hazards I was with my parents, which was my proper place: I had but to de-
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clare who I was; no one had any power to take me away. Such was my way of reasoning.

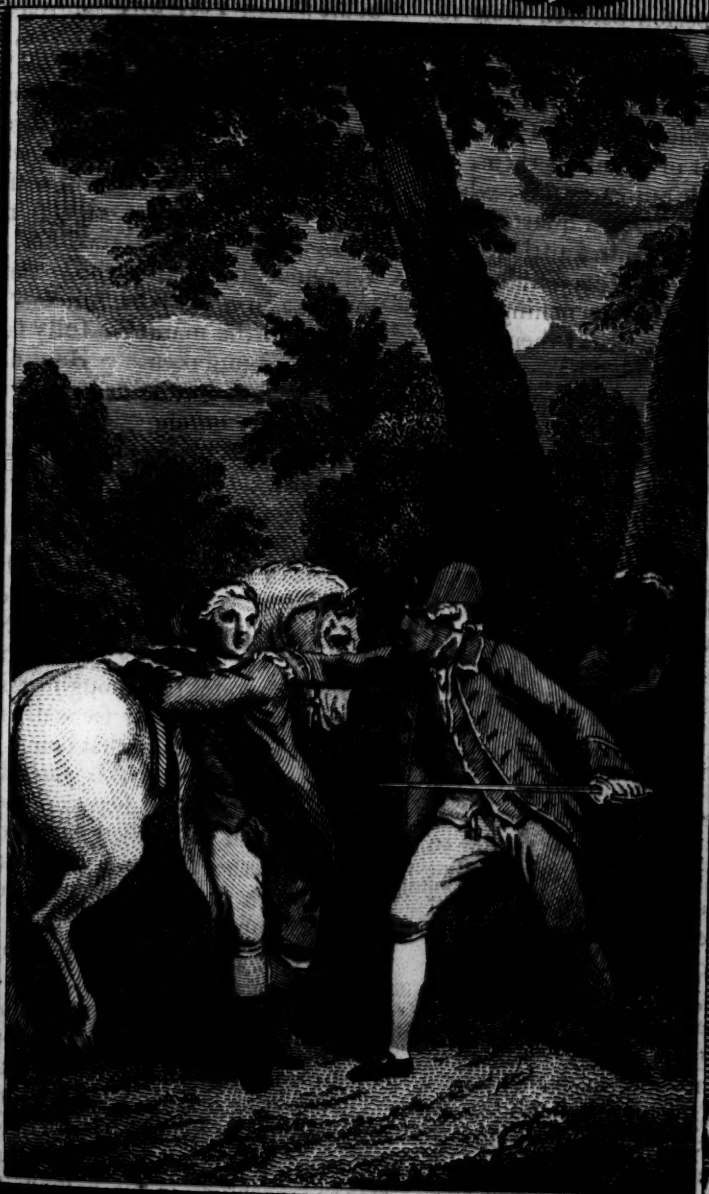
The marquis was quite at a loss. Two days after, he still asked me what was to be done; accustomed as he was to my company, he could not prevail on himself to leave me. The charms of living with a person beloved were so bewitching, that I was as little mistress of myself in this particular. The eight days that we had fixed for his repose were more than passed; neither I nor my lover ever thought of counting them.

We used to walk out every day, when the heat was over, about a quarter of a mile from the village, into a little wood, round whose skirts ran a crystal stream: the nightingales, after quenching their thirst in the rivulet, perched themselves on the neighbouring boughs; and, by the delightful melody of their warbling notes, made us chuse that charming place to rest in. One evening, when the moon shone very bright, we heard a man on horseback ask the road to such a village, and how far he was from it. At first we imagined he spoke to somebody in the road; but, on his repeating the question, the marquis, out of his usual good-nature, said, 'This is some stranger who is out of his knowledge; I must direct him, for by his uneasiness he has certainly lost his way.' Upon this he called to him, and gave him proper directions. The stranger, overjoyed at it, asked if the person to whom he owed this obligation belonged to the village. My lover, without reflection, answering in the affirmative, the stranger enquired if an officer of distinction had not come thither in a chaise with three servants, and whether he went any farther. At this question the marquis, who was near me, made a sign. 'This regards me,' said he in a low voice; 'keep out of sight, I must examine farther; perhaps it is my traitor of a servant.' Though I trembled for fear, I left him to act as he thought fit. My lover made up to the road; and, disguising his voice, told the stranger that he could inform him better than any one, the officer he described being lodged at his house. 'What! are you then the inn-keeper?' replied the stranger, riding up to him. 'Yes,' answered the marquis, 'and the only one in the village. If you will come and taste my wine, you

will own, that if it is not the best in the country, at least it is as agreeable as any.' The stranger by this was come up, and the moon, unluckily for him, being under a cloud, did not discover who he was talking with. 'Do you say,' said he, stopping his horse, 'that the officer I mentioned is at your house?' — 'Yes, Sir,' answered the marquis; 'and, to convince you, I will describe him. Is he not a tall young man, with black eyes, and wears a platter or large patch on his forehead, his hair curled, and had on when he came a light brown surtout with gold frogs?' — 'You are right,' replied the stranger; 'it is certainly he. I am very lucky in meeting you! And tell me, pray, is he here still?' — 'Yes, yes,' said the marquis, fully satisfied he was not mistaken. 'How does he employ himself?' added the stranger. 'Why, as to that,' replied the marquis something mysteriously, 'he —' 'Out with it!' cried the other; 'makes love perhaps. Am I not right? There is no great harm in that, if the girl be worth the while.' — 'Oh, I warrant her worth the while,' replied my lover, lowering his voice and drawing nearer; 'if you doubt it, I can soon convince you; for though it is but moon-light, one may see well enough not to be mistaken in that point. And, to tell you the truth, I was listening to a conversation between the two lovers, when you called out; I do not know whether the noise you made has not disturbed them; but, if you have any curiosity, you need only alight and follow me, to see them together without being discovered.'

The bait was too alluring not to take. He was no sooner dismounted, but the marquis seized him by the throat. 'I have you, traitor!' cried he, presenting the point of his sword. 'Confess, or die this instant!' I screamed out, for fear the marquis, in his passion, should dispatch the wretch. 'Fear nothing, Madam,' said the marquis, 'I have secured the villain. Own the truth!' continued he, turning to the man, 'and I will pardon you on that condition, and provided I never see you more.' The traitor, finding it was the marquis, seemed more dead than alive, and fell at his feet, dreading his resentment. 'Speak,' continued my lover; 'you know me, and I will be as good as my

Two days after, he still asked me why I was so late, and the answer was, that I was waiting for a horse. He then said, that if I was not the best in the country, at least it was as good as the country, and the answer was, that I was waiting for a horse. He then said, that if I was not the best in the country, at least it was as good as the country, and the answer was, that I was waiting for a horse.



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THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
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1. The first step is to identify the problem or goal. This involves understanding the current situation and what needs to be achieved.

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1. The first step is to identify the problem. This involves understanding the situation and the goals that need to be achieved. It is important to gather all relevant information and to consider the perspectives of all stakeholders involved.

'my word.' The servant, knowing he might depend on his master's promise, informed him, that he was drawn in and corrupted by the old marquis's gentleman. 'What, Forfan!' cried the marquis in a surprize. 'How can that be? You dissemble the truth; my father has discharged him.'—'It was in order to make his peace,' replied the man, 'that, as soon as he heard Madame Des Roches was gone off, he took it into his head, knowing his master's passion, to find her out for him. He was sure, as he said, there was a correspondence between your lordship and the lady; and he did not doubt success if he could intercept one of your letters.'

'With this project he left Paris, and came privately to the camp. He pitched upon me preferably to any other, because I am his countryman, was formerly his servant, and was recommended by him to your lordship. After reminding me of all this, he told me what had happened to him, and his design of getting his pardon, and revenging himself on the lady who had occasioned his misfortune; promising me, that if I came readily into his measures, besides a suitable recompence, he would make my fortune. Finding me but too well disposed to second his design, he acquainted me with the contrivance, and directed me to be always near you, that when you wrote any letters, I might be entrusted with them, and then deliver them to him, in order to compass his design.'

'M. De Forfan was too well obeyed; as soon as your lordship ordered me to go to Paris, I went to the village where he lay concealed, expecting to hear from me. He hugged me for joy, when he read the letter with which you had entrusted me. "Let us go," said he; "this is something; and I am sure of being taken into favour again." He was in the right. The moment he wrote the old marquis word at his arrival, that he had news of Madame Des Roches to him, he had admittance, and was restored to his place. It was resolved, I should return to you with the answer I brought, and continue to intercept your letters, in order to discover where the lady was, which you did not mention in the packet I had received; and

that I should send all letters I could secure, under a direction they gave for that purpose.

'But your sudden departure from the army, which we did not expect, disconcerted all our measures. I could only acquaint M. Forfan with it, and what road the equipage, with which I was left, was to take. The third day after we set out, a postilion belonging to the old marquis met me with a letter from M. Forfan, ordering me to leave the equipage, and endeavour by any means to discover what road you had taken; with a promise, that if I could find out Madame Des Roches by it, supposing you were gone thither, that the old marquis would reward me very handsomely, and advance me in his family. This was the reason of my pursuing you so obstinately, and flying when met by your secretary; being apprehensive I was discovered, and that you had sent him after me. But I was no sooner clear of him, than I renewed my enquiry, and this with so much diligence in all the villages on the road, that you see, my lord, I should have succeeded, had I not unexpectedly met with you. Heaven, to punish my treachery, would not suffer it to prosper. I am in your power, and you may dispose of me as you please: but I trust in your clemency, and hope you will shew mercy to a poor wretch, who has suffered himself to be corrupted, and who was really informed that it was for your good, and that it was in reality serving you, to break off an affair, as they termed it, which, sooner or later, must end in your ruin, and which the marquis your father was determined to prevent.'

The servant, after this protestation, threw himself again at the marquis's feet, and wept bitterly. I was very solicitous in his behalf. 'I will keep my word with him, Madam,' cried the marquis, 'provided he never approaches me more. Nevertheless, prudence directs me to secure him till I am at home again, to prevent any farther treachery.'—'Ah, my lord,' cried the fellow with tears, 'I swear by all that is sacred, that it is the farthest from my thoughts; and, if you grant me a pardon, I shall make no other use of it than to endeavour at repairing

'repairing the fault I have had the misfortune to commit.' The man's behaviour had so much the air of a sincere repentance, that I was much moved. I pleaded so earnestly in his behalf, that the marquis released him, assuring me, that any request of mine should be implicitly complied with; and as a proof of it, he gave him four louis-d'ors, telling him, his thanks were due to me, whom he intended so cruelly to injure. After this the marquis dismissed him, and we returned home reasoning on what had passed.

The day following the marquis resolved upon leaving me. If he was grown fond of my company, I found the same satisfaction in his: all my reason was summoned to stifle my tears when he took leave. 'Remember,' said I, embracing him, 'my fate depends on your heart, and in that alone my happiness consists.'—'Alas!' replied my lover, 'is it possible for me to live a moment without doating on you? I know no other pleasure but that of seeing you, and telling you so; and as for the intervals of absence, they never will be reckoned in my account of life.' Saying this, he threw himself into his chaise and remained silent. The people were gathered about to see the parting; every thing surprizes in a village. I could hear them say, 'This is like brothers and sisters, indeed! See how fond they are of each other!'

Had not my heart been full, I could not have forborne laughing at the simplicity of my countrymen; but, after all, it would have been ridiculous. Is there so much difference between a brother and lover? Knowledge or prejudice pronounces. How many do we see determined by nothing but prevention. It is so at court; why should it not be so elsewhere? Man is still man in all stations.

The marquis was no sooner gone, but I gave a loose to tears and complaints. 'When shall I see again,' cried I, 'this dear man? What will be the event of so tender and unfortunate a love? Are we only enamoured with each other, to be continually parting?' The old marquis came into my thoughts next. He was acquainted with my place of retreat, he accosts me with fury in his eyes. 'Take your choice,' says he, 'either me or a cloister. It is in vain for you to place your confidence in

my son; he cannot assist you, nor shall ever be yours. You ought to tremble at the thoughts of provoking me, as you must both pay very dear for the dangerous advantage he has gained.' These imaginations were so strong and lively, that I trembled for fear. Alas! it was in vain to have recourse to Heaven; it was deaf to my entreaties. Can a heart so strongly attached to this world expect relief from above? No, it is not worthy; to deserve, one ought to be ashamed of such weaknesses. But my strength failed me; love had so cruelly overwhelmed me, that nothing but what occasioned my distress could possibly relieve me: I found no comfort, in fine, but what sighs and tears afforded.

Three days were spent in continual grief and apprehension. The whole family, astonished at my profound melancholy, strove in vain to divert me; but the pensiveness which had seized me was proof against every thing.

On the fourth day, in the morning, my mother came into my chamber, saying that a chaise had stopped at the door, and that a stranger wanted to speak with me. I desired he might be brought to me. How was I surprized, when I found it to be Dubois! 'Is it possible,' said I, receiving a letter from him, 'that, after the apprehension the marquis and I were under lest you should be known here, that he should venture to send you?'—'I have taken proper precautions,' replied he; 'this false nose,' (he really had one in his hand) 'would disguise me to my own father; so there is nothing to fear on that side. Would to Heaven I could as easily reconcile you to the news I bring!'—'What has happened?' replied I very earnestly. 'Read,' added Dubois, 'and then you will see, whether my lord marquis could have pitched upon any one else to send on this occasion.'

I opened the marquis's letter with trembling. Would any one imagine the contents? Upon reading the first line, it was watered with my tears. It was as follows. If ever grief dispatched any one, how came I to survive?

I Am in the utmost despair, my charming Jenny; judge of it by the horrible news I here send you. I lose

lose you for ever; but be astonished at the excessive cruelty of my fate. I am cut off from all hopes of ever being yours; and, to compleat my misfortune, am obliged to employ all the power I have, to prevail on you to stab a dagger to my heart. But this is keeping you too long in suspense. My father lies at the point of death, brought to this extremity by you and me; he calls for you, wishes for you, and will die in peace, he says, if he expires with the name of your husband. Can I have the cruelty, can I be so barbarous a son, as to let him perish, if it be in my power to save him? If I am so unfortunate as to lose him, let me not be liable to reproach myself with being the hated cause of his death. If I ever was dear to you, O most lovely of thy sex, haste away! A minute, an instant, may render me the most guilty of mankind!

‘What is it to me?’ cried I, redoubling my tears. ‘Let the cruel parent die. Am I to be answerable for the fury of his passion, and the fatal condition to which it has reduced him? And you, my lord marquis, what have I done to deserve this treatment?—Just Heaven!’ cried I, ‘was it for this you reserved me? And you, destructive charms! to what have you brought me?’ Saying this, I was so overwhelmed, that unless Dubois had supported and soothed me, I must have swooned away.

The marquis had foreseen, without doubt, the condition to which his letter would reduce me. His valet de chambre pulled out a phial, whose precious elixir cruelly restored me to myself. ‘Alas! why would you not suffer me to die?’ cried I to Dubois. ‘Why do you give me this barbarous relief? Like a criminal dragged to the torture, you strengthen me, only that the severity of the strokes may be the more sensible.’

Dubois, as much as he was prepared for such a scene, was so dejected, that he was scarce able to comfort me. ‘In the name of all that is dear to you, Mademoiselle,’ said he, ‘bear up against this storm; think what a condition I left my master in! If you knew——’ Alas, it is that which ‘distracts me!’ cried I, interrupting

him. ‘If I suffered alone, the near prospect of death would alleviate my grief; but the consideration of my dear lover retards my despair, and withholds my fleeting life. What would become of him? Alas! if he dreads the approach of a death, whose idea makes him tremble, and obliges him to sacrifice all that is dearest to him in the world; what would become of this faithful lover, to what extremities would he not be hurried, if he had my death to lament, of which he might justly think himself the cause?’

After saying this I remained exceedingly pensive; but coming to myself. ‘Let us go,’ cried I; ‘this lover, whom I adore, shall know how extensive a power he has over me. I designed myself for him alone; myself was all I had, of which he has been master a long time. He may dispose of his own, and I obey. Yes, he shall know, by the greatness of the sacrifice, that though I am infinitely below him in every thing else, I am not his inferior in point of noble sentiments; and that, whatever example he can set, I am always ready to imitate him.’

Dubois, surprized at this effort, applauded my resolution with tears in his eyes. ‘What a grandeur of mind!’ cried he; ‘after this proof, of which I am a witness, can I any longer wonder at the excess of passion you create? Go; you deserve a throne.’ I made no answer to such frivolous encomiums: could self-love, overwhelmed as it was with grief, find its account in them? I ordered Barbara very sternly, for the first time, to get my things ready for my journey. The word was no sooner given, but the whole house was in tears. ‘What, are we going to lose this charming lady?’ every one cried. ‘And why? Are we so unfortunate as to be the occasion of it ourselves?’ ‘No,’ replied I, speaking to my mother, whose tears increased my trouble. ‘I tear myself from you, God is my witness; an order I am bound to obey, an unfortunate accident drives me from this delightful abode. Oh, could I spend my days with you!’ Saying this, I embraced my mother; my father out of respect withdrew. ‘Alas! suffer me,’ said I, taking him about the neck, ‘to shew how dear you

'are to me. Perhaps a little time will convince you I but do my duty.'

I got into the chaise, leaving my father and mother much surprized, particularly my father, whose very soul was moved with my endearing behaviour. My aunt, as fond as she was of her village, jumped into the vehicle, crying out, she was so bewitched with me, (that was her expression) that she would leave all that was dear to follow me to the world's end. I embraced her by way of acknowledgment. My mother enquired what she must do with the goods. 'Keep them,' replied I, stretching out my hand; 'whether I return or not, all I have is yours, both through gratitude and duty.'

What reply was made. I did not hear; but doubtless my words were as surprizing as the hurry in which we drove away. The chaise flew. Dubois was solely employed in hastening on the postilion. Our expedition was incredible, proper orders being given at the several post-houses, and the relays were always in such readiness, that we did not lose a moment.

Nevertheless, I learned from Dubois, whose business it was to go before and prepare the relays, that the marquis found his father very ill, and almost speechless; that Forfan was in favour again, and never from the bed-side; and that the servant who had betrayed his master could not be heard of. He added, with a view I suppose of strengthening my resolution, that the marquis as much dreaded as he wished for my presence; and that if I did not conquer myself, so as to restrain my tears, he would not answer for his life.

I loved the dear man too well, not to make it a law to command myself. I promised Dubois to devour my tears and affliction, and that was as much as could be expected. Barbara, who heard all this without comprehending one syllable, cried out from time to time, 'Good God! what will become of my lady? Can any one be so hard-hearted as to vex so good a creature? I will pray to God so much and heartily, that he will take compassion on her.' Alas! she was in the right; to be able to raise one's mind to Heaven is being half comforted.

There are periods in life when misfortunes combine in overwhelming us. Dubois was in such a hurry to get the

postilion forwards, that driving foul of a coach, we overturned it as we passed the opera-house; which, breaking down one of our own wheels, obliged us to stop. The screams of the women in the coach, that day topsy-turvy, drew together a hundred flambeaux and as many people, so that we saw as clear as if it had been noon-day. Dubois, who was determined how to behave, had left me there, whilst he fetched a coach. During this interval, the coachman and footmen belonging to the injured equipage were cudgelling my poor postilion, especially as they saw none but two frightened women in the chaise, whose presence was no check upon them. This uproar still gathered more people; the noise was so great, it was impossible to hear one's self speak. I was in hopes every minute of being delivered from this crowd by Dubois's coming; but I had been told I must suffer, and it was not long before it happened.

The first thing I met to chagrine me was the Duke of —, who from his coach knew me again. 'Ah, my God!' cried he, calling to his servants, 'make up to that chaise, and prevent the lady's coming to any harm from this accident; she is my acquaintance, and a woman of quality.' I grew pale when I recollected this nobleman; his discourse had drawn the eyes of the crowd upon me. But what became of me, when the ladies who were overturned got out of their coach, one of which I knew to be Madame D'Estival, the Miss D'Elbieux of whom I have already said so much. I would have given any thing in the world to have been a hundred leagues off. I endeavoured to pull my head-cloaths over my face, to escape her curious eyes; but it was too late, she had got a glimpse, she knew me again, and asked her servants if it was my chaise which had occasioned the disorder. 'What!' cried she aloud, when they answered in the affirmative; 'what! has this little husky been bold enough to overturn my coach? And shall I tamely suffer a country-puiss to drive over me unpunished? Here, drag her out of her chaise headlong,' said she to her servants, 'and teach her better manners; there is nothing she does not deserve for such a piece of insolence.'

One may imagine my mortification and

and terror at hearing this cruel order, and how I looked at the approach of four footmen with their flambeaux. But a protector was not wanting. The Duke of —, who had quitted his coach, hearing my cries, came running with his servants, and drew his sword. 'Let me see who dare approach this chaise!' cried he, clapping on his hat: 'this lady is my acquaintance; whoever has the impudence to molest her shall repent it!' This resolute speech stopped the footmen. Here the scene might have ended, had not the too courageous Dubois, who came up to me at the same time as the footmen, and who had been informed of the danger I was in, began to lay about him with his whip: this was a signal to a fierce battle. All the livery-servants attacked Dubois with their flambeaux: the duke's men, and those of his friends, joined in his assistance; and but for the guards, who came up by the greatest good luck in the world, a bloody fight must have ensued. The gentlemen, who till now had been only spectators, were severally engaged according to their inclinations. The young duke, who had undoubtedly a mind to give me proof of his constancy in the attack he had shewn in my regard, began to deal about his blows, and a hundred young fellows like himself did the same; but, having spoke very politely to the officer then upon duty at the opera-house, and begged of him to do his office quietly, he appeased the tumult, and at last prevailed so far as to put things upon a foot of accommodation.

The young duke, who had spoke to the officer, begged of him to assist in conveying me to his coach, which was waiting for me. Madame D'Estival, perceiving that I was like to get away from her, talked to the officer so peremptorily, that he was obliged to turn about. 'What do you mean to do, Sir? Do you imagine that what has been alledged shall hinder me from complaining, and punishing a little wretch, who, out of mere malice, comes and drives over my coach, and insults me in the face of the whole world? There are a hundred witnesses to swear this. It is infamous to protect a little country baggage after such behaviour, and to shew no manner of regard to a woman of quali-

ty.' The officer, surprized at these reproaches, and really finding that she who made the complaint was a person known, turned towards her, and told her it was not for him to decide our quarrel; that he only did his duty in preventing mischief; that my chaise was broke down, and it was but just to help me from thence: besides, that I was a person of distinction too. 'How! of distinction!' replied very scornfully Miss D'Elbieux, or more properly Madame D'Estival: 'of distinction! I believe you have lost your senses. Of distinction! a little creature, daughter of a wood-cleaver, a tenant to my late father. Ah, ah! ah!' continued she, feigning a mock laugh, 'unless she be in keeping; which I make no doubt of—' The Duke of —, who had been silent hitherto, and who was so persuaded of my being of quality, that he would have been cut to pieces in maintaining it, cried out, it was very unbecoming, in order to gain one's point, to have recourse to calumny, and say such vile things: that he knew me very well, and that there was not one word of truth in all that had been said; besides, that it was no fault of mine, if my awkward postilion had thrown over a coach; that nobody was hurt; but, as for me, it was easily seen I was the only person who suffered, since I could neither get backward nor forward; and that, instead of abusing me at that rate, in such a case every one ought to think themselves obliged in honour to relieve me, instead of being so cruelly insolent. That he was not surprized at the fury with which they persecuted me, for that I was handsome; which alone was sufficient to draw their malice on me, and to make me very criminal in the eyes of certain people.

This extraordinary conclusion, proceeding more from the duke's partiality for me than the real truth, made every body laugh, and take my part. A general murmur was heard in my favour; a hundred arms instead of one, and as many coaches, were proffered, to extricate me from this trouble. Every thing now went wonderfully; but I was fated to undergo one mortification more before I could be out of pain. It was this.

Publick entertainments at Paris bring people together, who perhaps otherwise never would have met. As ill luck

luck would have it, and which would seem almost impossible, the true Countess Des Roches was that night at the opera. The stop of coaches I had so innocently caused retarded her coming out, and being obliged to pass by me, she enquired still more unfortunately of the duke's servants, near whose coach her's had stopped, the reason of the disturbance, and the names of the ladies that occasioned it. The footman having satisfied her as to the first point, told her he had learned the names of the ladies that were overturned, but as to her in the chaise, he knew very well that she was Madame Le Countess Des Roches. 'Ah! ah!' replied the true one, addressing herself to her husband and two ladies in the coach, 'the accident is pleasant enough: you will find she will prove the same who stole our name and interest at court, and after whom we have made so much enquiry; we must have her apprehended upon the spot.' Upon this she sent to desire the officer to come to her coach; having, as she said, things of the utmost consequence to communicate to him.

Whilst this second conspiracy was carrying on against me, of which I was at that time luckily ignorant, they had but just helped me from out of the chaise. The young Duke of —, presenting his hand, would oblige me to get into his coach; but Dubois having spoke something in his ear, he said aloud, 'That is very right,' and then led me to another which had the marquis's livery. The coach was just going off, when a voice cried out, 'Stop, stop, the fictitious Countess Des Roches!' Dubois, who smacked the matter, and had leaped into the coach with me, put his head out of the door, and bid the coachman gallop off, and mind nothing. This direction saved me: it was executed so swiftly, that, to the misfortune of those carriages that happened then to stand in the way, the horses being pressed, flew like birds, dashing, hitching, and beating down every thing they met; and, in fine, whirled me out of this cruel disaster, from which I began to despair of ever being able to extricate myself.

It was near eleven when I arrived at the marquis's house; and his people stood ready to receive me as I alighted from the coach, pressing to see a person

so remarkable by the present circumstances. The marquis was waiting for me; he looked pale, dejected, and like one who had been shedding tears: he that was used to be so neat, appeared in a very great dishabille; even his very hair spoke his affliction. Fetching a deep sigh, he took me by the hand and squeezed it. As we passed along the apartments, he attempted to speak, but could not utter a single word. All these things struck me to the heart. I do not well remember what passed in my mind during this melancholy quarter of an hour: what occurs to me perfectly well is, that my eyes were dry, and my countenance resolute; the marquis durst not look me in the face, and I never ceased gazing on him.

We arrived at length at the door of the fatal apartment of the old marquis; it was so darkened that I could distinguish nothing in coming in but two wax-lights, whose feeble glimmering was eclipsed by a large green shade. My lover squeezed my hand again a second time, sighed once more, and left me in the middle of the room, to go to his father's bed-side. 'My lord,' cried he, in a faltering voice, 'here is lovely Jenny come to proffer you her hand in person; would you have her approach?' A low voice, like that of a person in extremity, replied, 'What do you say, son?' The marquis, who in the agony he was under could not repeat the words, bid Forfan, the gentleman I have often mentioned, tell his father what he had been saying.

The old marquis had no sooner understood what they were saying to him, but he cried, in a weak voice, 'Son, I am satisfied.' Then remained silent.

My lover asked him if he would not see me. 'Alas!' replied he, in broken accents, 'I have not strength enough; however, let her draw near.' I did so with fear and trembling. The marquis taking my hand, presented it to his father. The sick man called for a light; one was brought, but it was with difficulty he bore the glare of it. He made signs to have it removed; after which he seemed to muse, and for a considerable time cast his eyes sometimes on me, sometimes on his son. 'Well, my lord,' said this dutiful son, 'how do you find yourself? Will not the sight of what is so dear to you afford some happy turn?' — 'Alas!' cried the old man,

man, 'it is too much; I have not spirits to support the joy.' Then addressing himself to me, 'You say nothing. O too charming Jenny! are you come hither against your will?' — 'No, my lord,' answered I, with a resolution I did not think myself capable of; 'and I swear to keep inviolable the promises your son has made in my behalf.' — 'How generous in this!' cried the old marquis; 'why can I not imitate it?'

Saying these words he made a sign to Forfan to approach him; after which the gentleman presented his hand, saying he had orders to conduct me to the apartment designed for me. I followed him with a swollen heart, but courageously resisted the tears that were for some time ready to start. Forfan took this opportunity, as we were going along, to ask my pardon, as he said, for his having been impertinent to me; promising to be so submissive for the future, that I should forget his former want of respect. I answered, very coolly, that he had no excuses to make me; and that truths, how disagreeable soever they were, ought never to give offence.

The apartment where he left me was profusely magnificent: the gilding, the sconces, and fine pictures, shone on all sides. My good aunt, who stood in admiration at all these things, made me observe them. For my part I scarce saw or heard; my heart was in such a cruel state of dejection, that from suffering so much I was almost insensible.

I had not been long there, when the house-steward came most respectfully to know if I would have supper served up. 'I want nothing,' said I to him; 'and the greatest service you can do me is to let me retire to rest.' He assured me his orders were to obey me as his master, and to take care I wanted nothing. After this I thought there was an end; but they laid a cloth, and I was not a little surprized to see two napkins. I said to myself, 'Sure they do not know Barbara is my aunt, and that she sits at table with me!' My little vanity was disturbed on this occasion.

When the cloth was laid, a number of livery servants bringing the dishes, delivered them to the house-steward, who placed them upon the table. He wore his hat all the while. I was not

used to these sort of ceremonies; and they served to amuse me, and dissipate my melancholy.

The first course was scarce served up, when a valet de chambre appeared at the door carrying two Flambeaux. How great was my surprize to see him followed by my lover! The marquis made a low bow, and after presenting his hand to place me at the table, he sat down over-against me without saying a syllable.

A sight so dear, and which I no ways expected, threw me into a fresh trouble, but not very insupportable. The number of servants in waiting was such a restraint, that I scarce durst cast my eyes towards him, and as often as that happened it was a stolen glance. I thought my lover appeared less concerned than when I first saw him: this discovery produced a mortal uneasiness.

I eat little; the marquis was very attentive to serve me with every thing he imagined I could like, but said not a word. 'What is the meaning,' said I to myself, 'of this silence, and these extraordinary ways of proceeding?' I observed the same conduct, and never altered it during the whole repast.

As much afflicted as I was, I sat longer at table than I intended. The presence of my lover detained me. At last I made a motion, which being taken for a desire of retiring, made the marquis rise: he took me by the hand; the flambeaux led the way. I was conducted into a bed-chamber, where I found two women waiting near my toilette, in order to assist in undressing me; one of them advanced an easy chair the minute I appeared, the other stood ready to attend me.

I was scarce seated, when the marquis, making me a very low bow, retired. I cast my eyes on him at that instant, and saw he was in tears. This sight overwhelmed me; and, in spite of all my efforts, I burst into a fit of crying.

One of the women, who was standing behind my chair, drew near, and with great sweetness begged I would not afflict myself, but employ the great share of good sense the world allowed me to have in surmounting my distresses; admitting it to be possible for me to have any in the splendid condition I then was.

'Alas!' cried I, sobbing, 'I deserve it not;'

'not; any body but me would support it better.' After these words; I asked if a woman, whom I had brought with me and loved, was removed from me? They told me, it was quite otherwise; on the contrary, that they had all the regard imaginable for her in consideration of me; that she was then actually at supper in the steward's parlour, and that I should see her instantly.

This answer pleased me, as well as the kind behaviour they observed towards me. When my aunt came, I desired to be left alone, and was accordingly obeyed. I stood in amazement at all this respect; and I judged it proceeded from their consideration of my being already the Marchioness of L. V. I was not deceived, that was the real truth.

I questioned my aunt very much about what she heard talked of in the house, and how they behaved to her. 'Ah, my God!' cried she, with joy painted upon her face, 'a thousand times better than I deserve: I have supped with the young gentleman's nurse, who was so extremely kind to me—to be sure they take me for somebody, for even the very household servants, who are all dressed like so many gentlemen, waited upon me, calling me Miss Bab, forsooth. I knew not the reason of all this civility; but, I can assure you, I never received so much in my life, and methinks I am in paradise. It is true, I believe that all this is on your account; but all is one for that: if I am obliged to you for it, I do not enjoy it the less.'

If I had not interrupted my good aunt, she would have talked till the next morning, she was so transported. Though I was not much inclined to sleep, I was so oppressed, that my eyes closed themselves in spite of me. Barbara perceiving it, told me with a yawn, I must go to bed, and that she would do the same with all her heart. I asked her if she knew where she was to lie. 'Yes, truly,' replied she, taking a candle; 'you may be proud on it. Do you imagine there is any thing wanting here? Whilst you was at supper, did not the nurse come in and shew me all your apartments, and the chamber allotted for me? Do but look,' said she, making me pass into a closet adjoining, 'at this damask field-bed!—Do

'you think I shall not sleep well? Good God!' cried she, laying her hand on the bed-cloaths, 'is it not a sin to spoil all this? What fine sheets!' said she, handling them; 'had our curate ever such a fine surplice?' At every step my aunt used such exclamations as would have made me laugh at any other time. She could never say enough of all this finery, and swore the king was never better accommodated.

After patiently hearing a deal of discourse of this nature, at last I got to bed. It was not without difficulty I went to sleep. There was something so surprizing in what had happened, that I could scarce believe sometimes but that it was all a dream: these flattering ideas were of no long continuance. 'Ah!' said I to myself, crying bitterly, 'it is but too true: I lose for ever what I love! Marrying the father, will there remain the slightest hopes in regard to the son? Great God, what have I done!' said I; 'into what distractions has my grief plunged me! Ought I to have consented to this shocking sacrifice? If it was determined that I never should be united to my lover, why did I not preserve to myself the feeble consolation of being free, and loving him all my life?' Sleep at length stole upon me, and soothed for some hours my troubled spirits. I was too much disturbed for it to last long: twenty times I started, and fell asleep again at different intervals. It was broad day when I awakened, and Barbara, accustomed to early rising, had been up above an hour. She asked me if I was sick, saying she had heard me make heavy moan. 'Alas!' answered I, 'my mind suffers more than my body.'—'So much the worse,' answered she; 'the body will soon feel the effects of it.' Poor Barbara little thought how much truth she spoke: it was not long before I knew it by fatal experience.

The moment I was up, the same woman I had dismissed the night before entered my apartment, and begged leave to dress me, in order to go to the marquis, who desired the favour of seeing me as soon as possible. I shuddered at a request I knew to be an order, and sat down to have my head dressed.

Casting my eyes on the pictures that hung in my apartment, I was struck with a face which resembled that of my lover.

lover. 'What lovely child's picture is that?' cried I, with some emotion. The young marquis, replied she who was dressing me; 'and next to it is our first lady. — How!' said I, 'has the marquis been twice married?' — 'No, Mademoiselle,' said the chambermaid; 'but as we look upon you as our second, I may be allowed the expression.' I was silent: this discourse struck me to the heart. I could not bring myself to look calmly on the thought. Our minds, like our hearts, cannot suffer any thing disagreeable, but make all manner of efforts to remove it.

I was but just dressed, when there came a valet de chambre from the young marquis, to know how I had passed the night, and if I was disposed to go to his father's apartment. I answered, I was ready when he pleased; and asked how the sick lord did. The valet de chambre told me, he had had a very good night, and that he spoke with much greater facility than he had done; which, they said, was a good sign, and gave great hopes of his recovery. Upon this comes Forfan, and told me, they waited for me with impatience, to read the contract to me that was just drawn up, and to have it signed.

The very name of contract threw me into a cold-sweat. 'I thought,' replied I, 'they would not perform that ceremony till the marquis's recovery.' 'He will take care,' answered the gentleman, most unmercifully, 'not to delay his happiness. He has spent best part of the night in giving instructions to the lawyer; and you yourself will be judge how much to your advantage. There is not a woman in all Paris, let her be who she will, who would not be in your place; in less than three months you will think so too.'

I do not well know how I got to the sick person's chamber: my knees bent under me through trouble and weakness. I found two strangers there; one was writing, whilst the other dictated at one end of the room. I judged they were proceeding upon the cruel contract.

The old marquis was sitting up. As there was more light in the room than the night before, I was surprized to find his looks so little altered to what one might have expected. He took me by the hand, and squeezed it with much

greater violence than one could have imagined from his condition, gave orders to be left alone with me, and then spoke as follows.

'Jenny, hear me; I have but two words to say. The state to which you see me reduced is owing to you; and if I recover, it is to you I shall be beholden for my life. My son assures me you are ready to make me happy; Dubois has given me an account after what an heroick manner you consented to this sacrifice. It is not yet too late; say but the word, and I will release you, and sacrifice, in my turn, the small remnant of life I have yet to come. — My word is engaged to your son, my lord,' cried I, resolutely, 'and I do not recal it: since he loves you so well as to offer you all he holds dear in this life, I ought to convince him that she, who has been judged worthy of his love, can likewise imitate his noble example. — Enough!' answered he; 'call in my son, and let them read the contract.'

Whilst they were obeying his orders, the old marquis asked me, if my being so near him was not disagreeable to me. I answered only with a low bow. My lover came in: he was dressed like one going to a party of pleasure; that melancholy which clouded his face the night before was dispersed. How cruelly did I suffer! 'This second effort,' cried his father, giving him his hand, 'moves me as much as the first: your contented looks convince me, and prove how dear I am to you. — I wish to God, Mademoiselle,' said he, 'you were so, either in behaviour or inclination!' I had no answer to make; the cast of my countenance would have belyed all I could have said. I observed the young marquis shunned my eyes, and that, in spite of an air of satisfaction, he suffered inwardly. This observation eased me a little. 'He still loves me,' said I to myself; 'and like a victim he is adorned with chaplets of flowers only to decorate the sacrifice.' The reading of the contract interrupted my reflections.

The titles of the parties were passed over, and they came immediately to the articles that regarded me. I had a jointure of four thousand livres; jewels to the amount of one hundred thousand livres; a coach, and a house with furniture in case of my husband's death

without issue: but, in case of issue by him, I was to enjoy his whole estate till the children were at age, when I was obliged to account with them for the profits of it.

Though I understood little of business, I was somewhat surprized to hear no mention made of his only son. I thought to myself he ought to have been the principal party in this authentick instrument; and he behaved himself so well in this affair, as to deserve to be considered in his turn. This idea struck me so strongly, that I could not help communicating my thoughts of it. 'She is an adorable creature!' cried the old marquis; 'what justness of reasoning! what fund of equity! She is a real treasure!' After this he spoke to me. 'Make yourself easy, Jenny; my son and I are agreed: every thing is settled betwixt us; he will be satisfied, and so will you.'

After they had read over the contract, they brought it to the old marquis to sign. It was then presented to the son, who did the same: however, not able to constrain himself so well, but that he let drop a sigh. This proof of the violence he did himself, and the tears which forced their way in spite of him, moved me to such a degree, that I let the pen fall twice from my fingers before I could sign my name. The old marquis, sick as he was, observed it. 'Ah! do not force her to it,' cried he. Then turned himself to the other side.

The marquis, taking hold of this interval, threw himself at my feet. 'Ah! what are you doing, Jenny?' said he all in tears; 'have you a mind I should lose my father?' The accent with which these words were pronounced made me tremble to the very heart, and I signed my name.

The old marquis, whom his son informed what I had done, turned himself round, and gave me his hand. 'Enough, Jenny,' said he; 'I know your sincerity, and am satisfied; the greater difficulty you had, the more generous is your conduct.' After that, he declared he was disposed to go to rest; and ordered Forfan to conduct me back again to my apartment, and to use his endeavours to amuse me. We all went out of his chamber; the marquis only remained: he waited on me to the door, and made me signs of approbation and satisfaction. Alas! it gave

me some small comfort. How cruel must one's situation be, when obliged to catch at such trifles!

I was scarce got to my apartment, but I found myself indisposed. They were obliged to put me to bed. A minute after, a shivering indicated a fever. I underwent the paroxysm; it soon turned to a hot fit, but did not continue, and I soon grew better.

My lover was entirely ignorant of what had happened to me. There was not one of the whole family who did not adore him, and would not have laid down their lives for him. They all knew how dear it had cost him to make this sacrifice to his father; and it was apprehended, with reason, that if he were made acquainted with what had befallen me, it might have consequences fatal both to the father and son.

However, it was impossible any longer to keep him ignorant of my situation. My presence had worked a miracle in favour of the old marquis; he was visibly recovered thereby, and they had conceived great hopes. He was no sooner come to himself, but he had a mind to finish the marriage; and he carried it with so much secrecy, that except Forfan, to whom he had given his orders, every one imagined the celebration of the marriage would not be performed the evening after signing the contract. His son did not even know it, till the priest was come. He sent for him, and said, he had now but one proof more of his tenderness to ask, which was, to conduct me into his apartment; that the apprehension he was under of expiring every minute, made him desire to have the consolation of leaving me his name before it was too late. The marquis, ever a good son, stifled his grief; and the better to prove his zeal, went away precipitately, in order to fetch me the sooner. But what became of him, when as he entered my room they made signs to him to tread softly! 'How now!' cried he, being told that I was in bed, and not knowing the cause; 'did not I send word to desire Mademoiselle might not go to bed before she had spoke to my father?' Every body was silent; no one durst speak: in fine, he would be obeyed. How was he struck, after knowing all I had suffered! 'Ah!' cried he in a pretty loud voice, 'this is what I always dreaded.'

I was not asleep; these words made me open my eyes. I saw it was my lover. 'Approach,' said I to him; 'you seem troubled. What would you have farther with me?' The marquis, fearing to oppress me afresh, durst not tell me the nature of his message, before he had enquired about my health. I answered him, that I felt no pain, for fear of giving him any uneasiness. These assurances brought him back to his designs. He intreated me, in the tenderest terms, to finish what I had so well begun. The calmness with which I answered him, he should have reason to be content, or the notion he conceived that he ought to inform me why my presence was required, lest the surprise might occasion some cruel accident, made him imprudently own the reason why he pressed me to rise. My love for him was still strong enough to give him this fresh instance of my attachment. The marquis passed into another room. They dressed me; and although my legs trembled under me, and I could scarce see out of my eyes, I followed him, and forced myself to finish this sacrifice, let it cost me what it would.

Every thing was ready for the fatal ceremony. Upon entering the room, I was conducted to the bed-side. The priest advanced. I gave myself and lover for lost. Resolution yielded to nature. A shivering seized my limbs, and a cold dewy sweat spread itself over my face. I gave a great shriek, and fell to the ground.

My fainting ended in a high fever; which redoubled, and brought me to the last extremity. The third day it abated. But how great was my surprise, when offering to rub my face, I found my hand withheld; and was told, that the little life I had left depended on keeping myself warm. This made me judge myself in danger. I begged the person who attended me not to dissemble the nature of my illness. It was some time before I received an answer. I could hear them cry, which only served to increase my apprehensions and impatience. At last one said, 'The young lady's good sense and piety will prevent any ill consequence from her knowing it is the small-pox.'—'How! the small-pox!' cried I; 'O Heavens! I am gone!'—'No, Mademoiselle,' replied the priest who had been

called in; 'take courage, and place your confidence in God: if this favourable turn continues, you will soon be out of danger.'—'You must not flatter me, Sir,' replied I: 'for God's sake, tell the real truth, that I may take care of my poor soul.'

The clergyman approved of my resolutions, commended me for them, and said, that the greater peace the mind enjoyed, Nature would be the better able to exert itself. I was under so great a dread of appearing unprepared before the judgment-seat of God, that I confessed myself with great devotion. After this I found myself much better; and, for the first time since my illness, began to reflect.

My first thoughts were, whether or no the young marquis was acquainted with the nature of my distemper. I was at a loss how to get the truth from my attendants: I was convinced they were all at the old marquis's beck, and consequently would not be pleased at my asking any such questions. After some debate with myself, I pitched upon a pretext I thought plausible, which was to enquire after the old marquis's health. I was answered, that the accident which happened to me in his presence, had like to have cost him his life, but that now he had been two days out of danger. 'And the young marquis?' continued I. 'He is pretty well,' answered they. That *pretty well* startled me. 'Does he know,' added I, 'what ails me?'—'God forbid he should,' replied they; 'nobody dares inform him of it, as the consequences might be fatal.'

The last words struck me: it was a slip, and they endeavoured in vain to palliate it. I concluded my beloved admirer was sick: I found it afterwards to be but too true.

However, I pretended not to suspect it. I resolved to take the first opportunity with my aunt, to set her a talking; she was too simple to disguise the truth: but care had been taken to prevent me. When I enquired for her, answer was made, that she had desired leave to be absent a few days, since she could be of no service to be; and that she would return after she had finished her business. I saw through the artifice, and judged something was the matter, which I must not expect to be acquainted with.

So much uneasiness, or the course of my distemper, brought on the fever
L 1 2 again;

again; and the paroxysm was so violent, that I was judged to be in extreme danger. When my aunt heard this, she would not be denied, but insisted on seeing me. As they gave me over, she was at last admitted. She no sooner set her foot in my chamber, but she bawled out, that she was my servant, and would have the management of me, otherwise she would tell every body that they had killed me only to vex her. This lucky anger saved my life. Her method was directly contrary to what had hitherto been observed: she gave me wine; took off some of the cloaths by degrees when I was too hot; and, in fine, was so careful of me, that in four days the pocks, which had begun to strike in again, filled much better than could have been expected.

Dear Barbara no sooner saw this change, but she pronounced me out of danger, and undertook to answer for my recovery, provided they did not tease me, as they had hitherto done.

These words being reported to the old marquis, who was on the mending hand, and who had reasons, as will be seen very shortly, to send continually to enquire after my health; these words, I say, forwarded the acknowledgment of a resolution I had little reason to expect. He sent Dubois to tell my aunt, she might assure me, he would not give me any farther vexation; and that as soon as I should be recovered, he would send me such news, as would obtain a pardon for all the uneasiness he had created me. Barbara having communicated this to me, calling all the saints in heaven to witness the truth of what she said, I was so much relieved by it, that in a short time I was much mended.

Barbara took so much upon her in my apartment, and there were such strict orders given for every one to obey her, that I was no longer pestered with my former attendants. I had two signal favours to beg of her, which hitherto I durst not mention, because the moment I began to speak, she took upon her, and enjoined silence; telling me very harshly, I must either be ruled or buried. This was so terrifying, that I held my peace in a moment; and no little girl, though never so well bred, ever stood more in awe of her mother. So excellent a means is fear to promote obedience.

It was now the thirteenth day of my

illness, and still I was not suffered to talk, when at last liberty of speech was a little indulged me. This was new life. 'Ah, my dear friend!' cried I, pulling her to me, and taking her about the neck, 'to you it is that I owe my life; I will never forget it.'— 'Let's hear no more of that,' said the good creature; 'I have only done my duty, and deserve no praise on that score: you have nothing to do but get well, that we may go back to our village. That is something like a paradise,' continued she, setting her hands on her sides; 'I prefer it to all your fine apartments and your Paris, where one breathes nothing but infestions and misfortunes. Go, go; talk no more about it, one had better a hundred times be poor, than pay so dear for being rich.'

My aunt, who was always transported when she was thinking of her village, said a great deal to the same purpose. I let her vent her humour; after which, addressing myself to her: 'Now, my dear friend,' said I, 'you must do me one kindness, and you will compleat my cure.'— 'I wish it does not hinder it,' replied she; 'I will lay a wager you are going to enquire after the marquis, the young one I mean; for as to the old one, I am not such a fool as to imagine you are any way concerned about him.'— 'You guess right,' said I, making much of her: 'where is he? what is he doing?'— 'If you must know,' replied my aunt looking down, which was her way when she told a lye, 'he is in the country, but will soon return.'— 'Ah!' continued I, 'how have I deserved that you should impose on me? I see plainly you no longer love me.' Saying this, I turned to the other side, and feigned to be very angry. 'There it is, now!' cried she, 'every trifle puts her out of humour; if I do not answer her, she cries; and if I should, she would cry much more. One does not know what to do! There is plague enough with some sort of people.'

Less than this was sufficient to alarm me very cruelly. 'Well then,' said I, 'since you will not satisfy me, I will rise and go myself.'— 'God forbid, dear child!' cried my aunt, running to me. 'Well, then, compose yourself, and I will tell you the truth, provided

‘provided you promise to place your confidence in God, and not be vex-
ed.’ I promised every thing she de-
sired; but, alas! what did I hear!

That amiable lover, of whom I was so fond, was taken ill upon my faint-
ing away. The constraint he laid upon
himself, to give his father proofs of a
more than filial tenderness, affected his
blood, and threw him into a burning
fever. He talked and raved continually
on me: when the paroxysms came on,
they were obliged to bind him, he hav-
ing in one of them broke from those
who attended him, and run to my
apartment to see me. The infection of
the small-pox, which he had never had,
seized him, and for eight days there
were little or no hopes of his life.

This account overwhelmed me; but
I durst not betray myself, for fear of
not hearing the real state of my ad-
mirer. My aunt assured me, that two
days before, his father having sent a
message, he began to mend; but every
one agreed he would be very much
marked, and become as homely as he
had been handsome before he fell ill.

‘Ah! what care I whether he be
handsome or not,’ I cried, ‘if his
life is but safe. Oh, Heavens! how
unfortunate am I, not to be in a con-
dition to tend him! Yes, dearest of
men, I would never leave your bed-
side; you should be convinced by my
tenderness in—’ Barbara inter-
rupted me very sternly, saying, I had
talked but too much; that I must com-
pose myself if I intended ever to be
well. I was for replying, but upon
her telling me in a resolute manner,
that if I would not comply, I must
not expect to hear any more of the mar-
quis, I yielded for fear of what she
threatened. I held my peace; but my
mind exerted itself.

The other favour I intended to beg
of my aunt, and which gave me very
great anxiety, was to consult my look-
ing-glass, that I might judge what con-
dition I was in, and whether the small-
pox had spared me. I was very uneasy,
as often as I reflected that my beauty
might possibly vanish. But, to do my-
self justice, I must say it was not en-
tirely on a principle of vanity that I was
troubled; though I was fond enough
of my face, yet I did not carry my folly
to any great excess; there was another
cause to which it was at present owing.

‘Heavens!’ cried I to myself, ‘what
will become of me if I grow ugly?
Will my lover know me again? Did
not that fatal beauty inspire his pas-
sion? Will it not be extinguished
with the lustre of what first created
it?’ This dismal thought pierced my
very soul: it was in vain to comfort
myself with reflecting on his generous
sentiments and probity; still a doubt
remained which overwhelmed me, and
this apprehension was a hindrance to
my recovery.

The next day I heard a piece of news
which pleased me. Saint Fal was come,
and appeared inconsolable at the recital
of what I had gone through, and the
condition I was then in. He sent me
word, that as soon as ever it was prac-
ticable he would wait on me to express
his concern for my illness.

He came ten times a day to the door
to be informed how I was. My aunt
added, that he never left his cousin;
and that the poor lad had enough to do
in tending two sick people: the two were
the young marquis and myself; as for
the father, he was perfectly recovered,
as we soon learned.

I promised myself great satisfaction
in seeing this amiable friend. I had a
project to execute, and which took up
my thoughts for some days. Saint Fal’s
probity was too well known to me, to
admit of the least distrust, neither did I
question his discretion. The design was
ridiculous enough, but suited with the
delicacy of my way of thinking. It was
always my opinion, that a humour may
be indulged, provided it tends to nothing
criminal, though a little out of the way;
for that is nothing, where pleasure and
fancy find their account.

But, before I executed my project, I
was curious to discover what effect the
small-pox had on my face. With this
view, I took the opportunity of my
aunt’s being in a good-humour, who
was certainly very excusable if she was
sometimes otherwise, considering her
continual fatigues; I desired her, not
without blushing, to bring me my dres-
sing-glass. ‘What to do?’ cried she;
‘not to shift your head-cloaths, I hope!’
‘Certainly you are not so mad.’—
‘Lord, no!’ replied I, ‘do you think
I would be so indiscreet? Nothing but
a little curiosity.’—‘Oh, is that all!’
cried she, interrupting me. ‘What,
you are afraid of being as homely as
the

‘the young marquis? Nay, nay, if
 ‘that be all, make yourself easy. I
 ‘will hold a wager you are not marked;
 ‘thanks to my lard, with which you have
 ‘been better anointed than M. Gripart
 ‘was, when caught making love to my
 ‘niece.’ I suffered the good woman to
 have her talk out; after which I renewed
 my request, and with some muttering
 she complied.

Though I had reason to expect the
 consequence of the pocks, which I was
 sensible covered me all over, yet I was
 so frightened at the hideous roughness of
 my skin, which before was so smooth,
 that I screamed out and let fall the glass.
 ‘I told you what would come on it,’
 cried Barbara, picking up the pieces;
 ‘you are much the better for your cu-
 ‘riosity, truly.’—‘Good God, my dear
 ‘friend!’ said I, very impatiently, ‘do
 ‘not be so much concerned for the loss;
 ‘I should not value that, if I did not
 ‘look so frightful.’—‘Marry, come up!’
 replied my aunt, ‘if you are a fool
 ‘(begging your pardon) I cannot help
 ‘it. Who told you that you were ugly?
 ‘I will take my oath, you will be hand-
 ‘somer than ever.’

I was so strongly persuaded of the
 contrary to what she said, that I cried
 bitterly. ‘Well or ill, as our good
 ‘patron shall order it,’ cried Barbara,
 ‘this is not acting reasonably, nor de-
 ‘serving the blessing of Heaven. Go;
 ‘you do not deserve to have any care
 ‘taken of you; and, since you have so
 ‘little confidence in my skill, I know
 ‘what I will do; I will go back to my
 ‘village, and God for us all.’ This
 was ever her threat, and I was sure to
 have it.

In order to make my peace, I promis-
 ed her not to cry any more; but upon
 condition that I might see myself again.
 Another glass was brought. Whether
 through prejudice, or from what she had
 said, I know not, but I thought I did
 not seem so frightful as at first. To be
 better satisfied, I lifted up one of the
 dried pocks, and saw with pleasure that
 the skin was smooth underneath. This
 put new life into me, as it freed me from
 much uneasiness. What mere trifles af-
 fect us either with joy or sorrow! We
 are but children at all ages: toys are
 still our pursuit; under different forms,
 it is true, but in reality much the same.

The day following afforded me such
 convincing proofs of the marquis’s re-

covery, that I no longer doubted the
 truth of what I was told concerning it.
 He wrote to me. What joy! His letter
 consisted but of four lines, and yet did
 me more good than all the doctors and
 apothecaries put together.

‘I Am assured that you are upon the
 ‘recovery; this has wrought a
 ‘perfect cure in me. If your love
 ‘equals mine, you will not be long in
 ‘following my example. Was not my
 ‘honour engaged, I would tell you
 ‘what urgent motives I have to wish
 ‘it. I must leave you to guess; my
 ‘father having reserved to himself the
 ‘privilege of informing you. Adieu,
 ‘my dearest; make me easy as soon as
 ‘possible.

This powerful remedy was so effica-
 cious, that my heart overflowing with
 joy, gave new vigour to my whole bo-
 dy. In two days I had strength enough
 to write an answer. Saint Fal, who was
 now admitted into my chamber, and to
 whom I communicated my design, un-
 dertook to deliver it. I had engaged
 him to be true to me, nor was I de-
 ceived.

‘IF a desire of seeing you, my dear
 ‘marquis, could make me well,
 ‘I should be able this moment to tell
 ‘you in person, that you are my only
 ‘happiness. Yet, alas! notwithstand-
 ‘my eagerness to behold you, I am
 ‘afraid I must expect a cold reception.
 ‘I am quite altered; my few charms
 ‘are now no more, as I plainly discover
 ‘with my own eyes: I only valued
 ‘them, as they secured me your affec-
 ‘tions. What can I think? Must I be-
 ‘wail the loss of them?

I waited Saint Fal’s return with the
 greatest impatience; never did moments
 seem so tedious before. ‘Ah!’ cried
 I to myself, ‘the bare idea of my be-
 ‘ing grown homely, has perhaps ef-
 ‘fected what I so much dreaded!
 ‘What blindness, that men should
 ‘doat on a vain outside, which a vi-
 ‘cious turn of mind often renders con-
 ‘temptible, and where the eye is not
 ‘taken at once, never give themselves
 ‘the trouble to examine whether the
 ‘want of such trifling allurements may
 ‘not be richly supplied from within! Is
 ‘it possible that a man, to whom I had
 ‘given

‘given my heart, and whom I have so much esteemed, should be so very worthless as to fix his affections on a little more or less beauty?’ His answer put an end to my cares, and resolved my doubts.

Saint Fal brought it, laughing very heartily. ‘You have occasioned,’ said he, ‘one of the most comical scenes that ever happened.’—‘Stay,’ said I, ‘let me be satisfied here first, before we go any farther.’ A serenity appeared in my countenance on reading the first words. He reproached me in the tenderest manner for doubting his constancy, and the little strefs I laid upon his sentiments. ‘Do you attribute,’ said he, ‘to your charms, the respect and esteem my heart conceived from the first moment I was acquainted with your amiable character, embellished with so many invaluable qualifications? Such is the beauty I admire, such the charms I esteem, and which never fade.’

The letter concluded with bantering me; he attacked me with my own weapons, and said it was my business to furnish myself with a new provision of sentiments, and referred me to Saint Fal for an explication. This made me still fonder than ever; and I was so charmed with the letter, that I kissed it with the greatest warmth.

Saint Fal finished what the other had began. ‘You do not know,’ said he, ‘that your note has put a thing into the marquis’s head, which perhaps he had never thought on otherwise. After he had bit his nails, according to custom, he called for a looking-glass, and having examined himself for some time, he cried out, “Truly I have great reason to be nice, indeed!” and then, “How ugly I am, Saint Fal! The deuce take me, I shall never dare look Jenny in the face again!” I burst into a fit of laughing at his exclamations, and a dialogue ensued that was pleasant enough.’ I insisted upon hearing the particulars. Saint Fal, finding it amused me, complied with my request. We are never tired with talking of what is dear to us, and it was past my hour of repose before I perceived it. My good aunt, who was inflexible on that head, took upon her; and, as she was in the right, we readily submitted.

I was confined to my bed eight days

more, but the time did not seem long. The amiable Saint Fal brought me news of the marquis three times a day, and he as often heard from me. The messages I received from his father, who frequently sent a valet de chambre to enquire how I did, bid me hasten my recovery, for that he designed me a present which would be highly acceptable. I durst not interpret the meaning of this, for fear of deceiving myself, and increasing my vexation in case of a disappointment.

I know not whether the mind has a foreknowledge of what is to happen, or only guesses at it; but I enjoyed a greater serenity than ever I had experienced before: I had not a moment’s uneasiness; or, if a little cloud arose, a thousand rays of hope, well-grounded as I thought, without knowing why, soon dispersed it. This interior tranquillity was a forerunner of the happiness which waited for me.

The day I began to sit up, Dubois came from the marquis, to inform me he had received a visit from his father, who was perfectly recovered. He acknowledged that the sight had given him great pleasure, and renewed his sense of the obligation he owed me; being convinced that, next to God, he was beholden to me for his father’s recovery. He added, that though there was no mention of it, he did not doubt but his father was of the same opinion; and that, notwithstanding he was forbid seeing me till farther orders, he was not alarmed at it, when he considered the manner in which the command was imposed. Dubois encouraged me not to be disheartened at this. ‘The old marquis,’ said he, ‘is positive, and will be obeyed, but good-natured and just at the same time, and I think his going into the country no bad omen; doubtless he has his reasons, and I will lay a wager we hear from him in eight and forty hours time. Such is the man, mysterious to the last moment; but, to do him justice, never obstinately in the wrong, nor easily dissuaded from what is right.’

I asked Dubois, if he thought the old marquis would see me before he left the town. ‘No,’ answered he; ‘for he dreads a sick person like death itself. And certainly his tenderness for his son must be at the highest pitch, since he could conquer himself

‘so far as to make him a visit; and if you knew the precautions he took before he entered the room, and the distance he kept when there, you would conclude his apprehensions bordered on folly.’

Dubois added, that he took his nephew with him, though it was easily discerned that the journey was no way agreeable, but that his complaisance would prevent his shewing any dislike. Indeed, Saint Fal’s character surpasses every thing I ever met with; and the woman who is so happy as to engage his affection and become his wife, may justly boast she possesses the phoenix of men.

Dubois and I were very deep in conversation, when I heard a noise at the door. ‘Go,’ said I to my aunt, ‘and see who it is.’—‘Ah! ah!’ cried Dubois, seeing the door set wide open by one of the old marquis’s valet de chambres; ‘it is he himself come to bid you adieu; his affection must be very great to have brought him hither.’ It was the old marquis, who stopping short about four steps from the door, called out, ‘I am come to know how you do, and take my leave.’ I turned towards the door, and congratulated with him on his recovery. ‘I have a great deal to say to you,’ continued he, ‘at our next meeting; I am ordered to take the country air, and am going; but we shall see one another shortly: in the mean time, I will send a lady to keep you company, a particular friend of yours, and one you will be glad to see. Farewell, lovely Jenny: take care of yourself; remember it is I who desire it; our separation will be but short.’ Saying this, he made a low bow, and retired.

Saint Fal came the next moment. ‘Well, charming Jenny!’ said he, ‘you have had a visit from my uncle; it is a great sacrifice he makes to you.’—‘I am overjoyed,’ answered I; ‘but cannot you inform me who this friend is that he will send, and I shall be so glad to see?’—‘It is a mystery,’ replied the count; ‘he would not let me into the secret, but he loves to surprize every body.’—‘Certainly,’ said I, ‘it must be Saint Agnes he means.’—‘That cannot be,’ replied Saint Fal, ‘for she is gone out of town; I saw both her and her

husband since my return: they came to enquire after your health before they set out.’—‘How!’ cried I, ‘has she been so obliging, and I know nothing of it!’ My aunt, who came in, assured me the lady had sent constantly every day, but that I was then so ill, that it was improper to let me know it.

Still my head ran on this friend I was promised, but could not imagine who it could be. Saint Fal’s taking his leave, and his generous resolution, as he said, to make love give place to friendship, was very moving, and banished all other thoughts. In return for so noble a conduct, and such disinterestedness, I promised that my study should be to deserve it; in which I have been as good as my word.

Dinner was but just over, when I was told that a lady enquired whether she could see me without giving any uneasiness. I guessed it was the person about whom I had been so inquisitive. My answer was, that I longed to see her. Alas! nothing was ever said with greater truth. It was Madame De G—. I screamed for joy, and opened my arms to receive her. She threw herself upon me. The pleasure of seeing each other after so long an absence, was too great not to bereave us both of speech for some time. At last I broke silence, crying out, ‘Is it you, Madam? Nay, then, let fortune do it’s worst, if I have found you again. In all the severe trials I have undergone since I was torn from you, my mind has ever preserved your dear idea. The pledge you left me of your friendship, the dear picture, which I have kissed a thousand times, is a silent witness.’—‘Poor thing!’ cried Madame De G—, interrupting me, ‘she is still the same; her gratitude charms me.’ Her expressions on the occasion were very tender.

Two hours were spent in mutual endearments. As desirous as I was of knowing how I came to be beholden to the old Marquis for her company, good breeding, I thought, made it necessary to enquire first after Monsieur De G—. She told me he was at his seat, where he impatiently expected the pleasure of seeing me. ‘How!’ cried I, ‘shall I ever be so happy as to live again with my worthy mamma!’—‘Yes, my dear child!’ replied Madame De G—, that

‘that is the motive of my coming here: but I am afraid I shall not enjoy you long. You seem surprized. On the contrary, you ought to be pleased. But ask no questions; I have promised secretly, and must not be worse than my word.’

So many precautions taken to keep me from the knowledge of what certainly regarded me very nearly, gave some uneasiness: I owned as much to my dear friend. ‘Take courage,’ replied she; ‘you may be assured I should never have been pitched upon to give you any vexation: it is too well known how dear you are to me.’—‘But, Madam,’ said I, ‘you are not apprized, I dare say, that my present condition is owing to what I have undergone?’—‘I know the whole affair,’ continued the good lady; ‘it was not the old marquis’s fault, as you think, that you were not married to him: your apprehensions were too precipitate; the evil was but imaginary—’ ‘Let this suffice,’ said she, breaking the thread of her discourse; ‘if you love me, do not oblige me to say any more. Knowing my fondness for you, I am diffident in myself, and will never pardon you, if you give me any cause to repent my tenderness.’

I was convinced I was not to expect an éclaircissement; notwithstanding my eager curiosity, I desisted from importuning her. I asked a thousand pardons for my imprudence, promising she should have no reason to complain of me a second time. She took me in her arms, and expressed a regret for being upon the reserve, declaring an entire confidence in me, of which she should very soon give convincing proof.

This dear friend never left me during my recovery: it was soon compleated. As I heard every day from my lover concerning his affairs, my heart enjoyed a perfect tranquillity, and my health was entirely established: excepting a little redness, it was scarce discernible that I had so lately recovered from the small-pox. I promised myself a delicate pleasure in surprizing the marquis; who, from my letters and Saint Fal’s information, had concluded that I was very much seamed. We may talk of the mind, and doubtless it has it’s force, but a little beauty is of great service. Alas! my charms were only cultivated for my lover’s sake; I knew no other

use of them than what my tenderness for him inspired.

Madame De G——, finding me fit to go abroad, asked if I was willing to go into the country with her. I answered by embracing her very affectionately. Something dictated to me the journey would prove fortunate.

The day before we set out, I desired Madame De G—— to permit me to do my devotions, in order to thank God for sparing my life. ‘Your pious sentiments I commend,’ replied she, ‘and am desirous of partaking in your devotion by accompanying you. As to our particular merit, where a due compliance with what religion requires is wanting, it is of small weight. The use of the sacraments is a powerful preservation against our own weakness, and the dangers which surround us on all sides. Your piety, Jenny,’ continued she, ‘edifies me. Persevere: Heaven, which never abandons those who place their confidence in it, will bring you to your wished-for port.’

Who would have imagined that a day I had sat apart for so holy an action, and consecrated to a sacred repose, should prove a day of trouble and vexation! But such it was; and had it not been for Madame De G——, whom I was so happy as to have with me, I must have lodged that night in prison. This may appear strange, but it is no fiction.

I was recollecting in meditation after communion, when I found myself pulled by the scarf: turning my head about, something surprized at the liberty which was taken with me, I discovered, to my no small terror, the man with the great whiskers, who belonged to M. Des Roches; he who insisted on being my husband, and had given me so much trouble. ‘You are caught at last,’ cried the Swifts; ‘if you make your escape from my master, you will be very cunning: he shall know you are here; the serjeants will make you walk. Well, well, you shall be taught better manners for the future.’

Let any one imagine my surprize, or rather perplexity. As ill luck would have it, I had no one near me: Madame De G—— was in another part of the church, where I had left her when I went up to the altar; but I presently resolved how to behave. I concluded, that I was not

in danger of being insulted in so holy a place. This reflection encouraged me to press through the crowd, which was very great, and at last I reached Madame De G—. 'What is the matter?' said she, looking at me. 'You are much altered; are you ill?' I told her what had happened, and shewed her the valet with the whiskers, who had followed me, and was standing at my elbow. She presently took the hint, for I had before acquainted her with my adventure. She only smiled, instead of comforting me. 'Be easy,' said she, 'there is not the least shadow of common sense in the affair; and if your pretended husband dare to give you any farther trouble, as blind as he is, he shall be made to see his folly.'

When service was done, Madame De G— rose up, and bid me follow her. Passing along, I saw a great bustle in the bottom of the church: the people whispered one another, and it was evident something had happened. Madame De G— ordered one of our attendants to enquire what was the occasion of the disturbance: he presently returned, saying, there were serjeants at the door waiting to take somebody into custody. 'This is designed,' said I to my worthy friend, 'against me.'—'Do not be afraid,' answered she; 'am not I with you?' I took heart again, and reached the door: but how was I surprized to find there the blind man, the little boy, and a gentleman holding a woman by the hand, and disputing with my pretended husband.

'It is very surprizing,' said the gentleman, 'that notwithstanding your misfortune of being blind, and this gentlewoman's asseverations, (meaning her he led by the hand) that you should persist in denying her to be your wife, because your son, who never saw her, tells you it is not her.' The man with the whiskers, who stuck close to me, hearing this, put in his word, saying aloud, 'My master is in the right, that is not his wife; this is she,' pointing to me. This drew the eyes of the assembly upon me. Madame De G— seeing the confusion I was in, bid the servants clear the way, and ordered the coach to pull up. The stranger made a sign that she was the right wife, and told the crowd the affair was as she said, and that it was a folly to question it. The blind man, as obstinate as a

mule, insisted he was right, and was for having both the women taken into custody, saying he had obtained a warrant for that purpose, and would have it served. This notable decision made every one laugh; but the person who was entrusted with the execution gave him to understand that he must chuse, and that very justly, for he had nomind to bring himself into trouble for him. We heard no more than this: we got into the coach. Madame De G—'s equipage made such a figure, and appeared to belong to a person of so great quality, that though the officer bawled out to have us stopped, nobody was bold enough to execute his orders.

Madame De G—, who was highly diverted with my fears, and thought the adventure very extraordinary, ordered a servant to stay and see the event. He informed us, that the man with the whiskers had followed us by his master's orders, still positive that I was his wife; but that upon the marquis's footmen giving him chase, he was so terrified, that he took to his heels without looking behind him; that as to my pretended husband, he was at last brought to reason, his wife having spoke to him in private, and given him such convincing proofs, that he owned to his friend he had been mistaken: that the serjeants were discharged as useless, his wife having declared, that so far from avoiding her husband, she had searched every where for him, when she heard he was not dead, as had been reported. All which was the more easily credited, as she had lived with a relation of her husband's, who came, having been sent for expressly, and confirmed what the other had said; the blind man knew her by her voice, and thus ended the affair.

The next day we set out. Madame De G—, as soon as we were out of town, said the tediousness of the journey must be alleviated by something that was amusing. 'Hitherto,' said she, 'I have had no opportunity of telling you abundance of things, and acquainting you with what I have gone through since I saw you. It is highly reasonable, my dear child, as such I have always considered you,' continued this worthy lady, embracing me; 'it is highly reasonable I should make a return for your confidence in me, by giving you mine. You know
' M. De

M. De G——, and his taste for women; you will easily guess I am going to entertain you with his gallantries: I have suffered from them of various kinds. I bore it all patiently for a long while, because his behaviour was ever respectful to me; but perceiving his conduct changed all on a sudden, and that I was in danger of losing him entirely, I resolved to dive to the bottom of the affair, and employ all means possible to break off an engagement, which seemed to be attended with worse consequences than any of the rest.

This was no easy task. Monsieur De G——, as you must have observed when with me, makes a mystery of every thing, and carries an appearance which deceives, and screens him from censure. I was much perplexed how to act. That he was desperately in love, even so as to neglect his private affairs, a thing not usual with him, and scarce ever at home, was evident; but how to discover this object of his passion was the difficulty. To endeavour to gain over those of his servants who were in the secret was lost labour: as they were more in his interest than mine, my enquiries, of which he was doubtless informed, served only to augment his precautions, and encrease his coldness to me. This threw me into great trouble, nor could I discern any way of extricating myself.

One day, when I was more melancholy than usual, my husband having for the first time been very rough with me, Christina, that trusty servant you remember at my house, found me in this condition, and pressed me so very earnestly to know the occasion, that, prevailed on by the grief she shewed, I discovered the whole affair to her. She told me I was too good-natured, and that instead of crying at that rate, which might prejudice my health, I ought rather to think of putting an end to his irregularities and my own vexation. "What would you have me do?" replied I. "Is it possible for me to hinder his liking another and slighting me?"—"Yes, certainly," answered Christina; "Men, Madam, are just what we please to make them. I would lay all I am worth in the world, if it were possible for me to be in your place, that

"I would soon cure him of his passion for his mistress, and make him more in love with me than ever."—"That would be extremely difficult," replied I, "for two reasons: the most important of them is, I have no longer that youth on my side which enchants—" "As if you were not still as handsome as an angel," replied Christina very complaisantly, "The other reason is," continued I, "without taking any notice of this piece of flattery," Monsieur De G—— loves women, and ever will: consequently, though I should extinguish his present flame, he would soon fall back, and all my endeavours would only serve to bring on new trouble, and estrange him from me perhaps for ever, particularly should he discover my practices."—"I allow this last observation to be just," replied Christina, after a short pause; "I would never advise a woman to appear to lay any restraint upon her husband; it is often an excuse for his extravagancies, and never fails of rendering the wife insupportable; nay, the obstacles laid in his way frequently give a sharper edge to his appetites, and heighten the enjoyment. This is my notion, and I believe well grounded."

I knew Christina had been well educated, and did not want for wit; but I should never have imagined she was mistress of so much good sense, I agreed with her in the principles she laid down, as I assured her, and which I had ever religiously observed. "So much the worse, Madam," replied Christina; "on some occasions we ought to strike out from the common rules: the great art is to time it right."

"Give me leave, before I mention the proper methods, as I think, for restoring you tranquillity, to amuse you with an adventure I had several years since with your husband M. De G——, which has some connection with what I have had the honour to say to you, and which I never yet related to you. It was always my opinion that we ought to be satisfied with doing our duty, without arrogating the praises of others on that account. For, to what purpose would it have been at that time to acquaint you with it, unless it were

“ to give you an unprofitable vexation,
“ and render myself suspected ?

“ I was about eighteen, when M.
“ De G——, whose heart perhaps was
“ not then otherwise engaged, began
“ to fancy me. I had not the honour
“ at that time, as you may remember,
“ Madam, to be so near your person
“ as at present; taken up with waiting
“ on your daughter, I thought of no-
“ thing but how to please and serve her.
“ My ambition went no farther; every
“ thing else seemed of no consequence
“ to me.

“ One day, when my young lady
“ was gone with you to the opera, M.
“ De G—— came into my room,
“ where I was ordering some little
“ things of my own in Mademoiselle’s
“ absence. “ What,” cried he, “ are
“ you all alone, Christina? I thought
“ you had been with my daughter at
“ the opera. Is it that you are not
“ fond of such things, or is my wife
“ so barbarous as to refuse you such an
“ amusement?” My answer was only a
“ yes, or a no; I do not recollect which:
“ but his coming into my chamber
“ made me colour very much. He had
“ never spoke to me before, so that it
“ was an honour quite new to me;
“ besides, I had heard of his taste for
“ young women; your ladyship’s cham-
“ bermaids frequently talked of it, and
“ I always took care to over-hear
“ them.

“ It was this which occasioned the
“ confusion I was in. I trembled,
“ not knowing which way to turn my-
“ self. He eyed me from head to foot,
“ and the greater eagerness he expressed
“ in viewing me, the more my con-
“ sternation increased. “ You are very
“ charming, Christina,” continued he,
“ presenting his hand. “ Do you
“ know I am determined to make your
“ fortune, and that from the time you
“ came hither I have been contriving
“ it?”—“ You are too generous, Sir,”
“ replied I, still blushing, “ to con-
“ cern yourself about so insignificant
“ a person. I am not so partial as to
“ think myself worthy your attention.”
—“ What do you call worthy?” said
“ he, interrupting me. “ I vow, I see
“ nothing in all Paris so amiable.
“ Why, your complexion is charming,
“ your eyes ravish one; let me have the
“ pleasure of gazing on them.” Say-
“ ing this, he drew nearer by degrees.
“ Heaven, Sir!” cried I, “ leave me,

“ I beg; if my young lady’s gover-
“ nance should happen to come, and
“ should find I have the honour of
“ your conversation, she will certainly
“ inform your lady; I shall be severe-
“ ly chid, and not without reason. I
“ am not one of those——” “ Do not
“ be afraid,” replied he, “ I am upon
“ the watch; and as for the mean opi-
“ nion you have of yourself, it is en-
“ tirely groundless: for know, Chris-
“ tina, that any man, even of the
“ greatest quality, would think him-
“ self compleatly happy to become an
“ equal, and enjoy the company of so
“ charming a creature.”

“ Saying this, to which I answered
“ as before, he came up to me, and
“ took the liberty of removing my
“ neck handkerchief. I thought it was
“ time to be very loud, imagining the
“ fear of being surprized with me
“ would make him retire; but I was
“ mistaken. He had the precaution to
“ send all the servants out of the way
“ under different pretences, and I found
“ myself to be entirely in his power.
“ This was evident; for, though I had
“ cried out twice, he was proceeding
“ to extremities. I was terrified, but
“ did not lose my presence of mind.
“ Well, Sir,” said I, looking earnestly
“ at him, “ make my fortune, and I
“ am yours.”—“ With all my heart,”
“ replied he very joyfully: “ make
“ your own terms, which I will accept
“ of, on condition you return my love.”
—“ Agreed,” answered I very cou-
“ rageously. “ Give me in hand a
“ hundred louis-d’ors to obtain my fa-
“ ther’s liberty, being confined on ac-
“ count of that cursed tax which ruins
“ so many collectors and other brave
“ fellows. After this you must buy
“ me a house, and provide for me, that
“ I need not go to service, and then I
“ will love you as much as you can de-
“ sire.”—“ Done,” cried M. De G——
“ quite transported; “ shake hands,
“ and take this kiss as earnest——”
“ No, Sir,” replied I, blushing more
“ than ever, “ you must begin with
“ surer tokens of your being sincere
“ than the kiss you offer: the money,
“ Sir.”—“ That is but reasonable,”
“ answered M. De G——, surprized no
“ doubt to find me so coming and more
“ alert than he expected; “ I will run
“ to my closet and fetch the money.
“ Stay here, I will return in a mo-
“ ment.”

“ He

"He was no sooner out of the room, but I made my escape. I flew up stairs to one of your women who lay ill, and consequently I was sure to find, "He will not come after me," said I to myself, "and for the future I will take care never to be alone, and so prevent his having an opportunity of plaguing me."

"I was as good as my word. Two years passed without his being able to speak to me: he lost his labour in watching for an opportunity. I was on my guard, and baffled all his attempts."

"I was now persuaded that M. de G—— had entirely forgot me, when rising one morning I heard him in his daughter's room. As my bed stood in one of the closets, I could easily hear what passed. I was not surprized at his early rising, which was customary, but at his coming into my lady's apartment, and that her chambermaid had opened the door without calling me. I grew uneasy; my door was not fastened, but I immediately bolted it very softly. Being secured from any visit, if he should have taken it into his head, I listened to the conversation with all the curiosity of a girl of my age."

"What! would you have me, Sir, complain to my mother of Christina?" said my dear mistress. "For what reason? The poor girl never deserved such usage from me."—"That is nothing," replied M. de G——; "do as I bid you: it is for her good that I put you upon it. While she stays here, she will not hear of being settled. I know a proper party for her, and when you are acquainted with the affair you will approve of the proposal. Is it possible you should have so little regard for what I say, as to hesitate a moment?"

"Mademoiselle De G——, unable to prevail with herself to say any thing against me, knowing the tender respect I had for her, still endeavouring to evade doing it, her father flew into a passion. "Well," cried he rising up, "I have done; but take notice, I will never forget your refusing me."

"This was more than enough to influence your daughter, who always

had, as you know, Madam, an uncommon respect for her parents. She called back M. De G——, who had pretended to go away, and promised to be directed by him."

"Since you know how to behave," replied he, "I am willing to forget what is passed; but it is upon condition you punctually perform what I require of you. Tell your mother that you have perceived of late that Christina is in love; that she is so infatuated as to receive her gallant in your apartment when you are abroad; that coming home unexpectedly, you saw——" I was so terrified at what I heard, that I bawled out it was false, and that I saw plainly my ruin was designed; but that I would publish M. De G——'s motives for having recourse to such infamous proceedings; that I would go immediately to acquaint his lady of the whole affair, and complain of a fiction as false as it was cruel and unjust."

"The tone in which this was uttered had a surprizing effect. M. de G—— apprehending I should be as good as my word, and seeing me rush out of the closet all in tears to go and inform you, Madam, of what was carrying on, he stopped me, saying, I was a fool not to see it was not all an artifice to oblige me to come out of the closet and make his daughter laugh. I did not push the affair any farther: it was evident he gave this turn to it only to stifle the matter. Persuaded as I was of this, and that he really intended to make you turn me away, that he might have an opportunity of prevailing on me without disturbance from you, or alarming the family—— (I was not mistaken, for I chanced some years afterwards to learn the whole design; he had gained over Mademoiselle's chambermaid, who was since turned away, and had undertaken to bring me to accept of his offers)—I vowed to M. de G——, that if ever he endeavoured to surprize me again, I would that instant leave the house, and proclaim my reasons to the whole world. From that moment, Madam, he has taken no notice of me, nor given me the least disturbance: so true it is, that when a young woman happens "to

“to be ruined, it is for want of knowing how to defend herself as she ought.”

Christina, after finishing this adventure, added, that she only related it to convince me, that my husband stood in greater dread of me than I imagined; and that if I had shewn a little more resolution, I should not have had such just reason of complaint.

I asked Christina, when she had done, what conclusion she drew from her story, and the reflection upon it.

“That M. De G—— is not so obstinate as you think,” said she; “and if you take proper methods, a stop might be put to the vexations which overwhelm you.”

“The first step I would advise,” continued the good girl, “is to find out your rival and her habitation; then to have her informed very peremptorily, that as yet you are ignorant of the affair; but that if once it comes to your knowledge, you have so much power, that she will be infallibly crushed, or confined for life. This done, which cannot but produce a good effect, some friend of M. De G—— must be applied to, and prevailed upon, after laying open your griefs, to talk resolutely with your husband on the subject. He must be desired to acquaint M. De G—— that you will be imposed upon no longer, but will come to an open rupture, which sooner or later must ruin his reputation.”

All Christina’s reasons could not prevail upon me to follow her advice; but occasioned a whimsical resolution, which seemed to promise equal success. I am apt to think no wife before me ever thought of such a stratagem. You shall be judge, my dear child,” continued Madame De G——; “I never reflect on it without laughing, and I will lay a wager you will do so too when you know it.”

Christina was no sooner apprised of my plot, but she clapped her hands by way of applause, and answered for the success. In order to set it on foot, I went into my husband’s closet the next morning. After enquiring how he did, the Carnival, said I, is at hand; I have a fancy to pass it, as well as the Lent, in the country, and not return to

Paris till after Easter. I am come to know, Sir, if you approve of it. The idea of my absence was too acceptable not to meet with approbation. He not only replied, I was my own mistress, and should be ever so, but even accompanied his genteel expressions, which were now a novelty to me, with a purse of gold, to make the Carnival the more agreeable, as he was pleased to express himself.

That very day Christina and I began our journey; but instead of taking the road which leads to my estate, I went to the house where her mother lived, whom I had sent for the night before, and acquainted with my design. They got me a taylor; I put on a night gown and a man’s night-cap, to prevent his having any suspicion. I made him take my measure, and bespoke two suits, one very rich, the other a little plainer, but begged he would make them with all speed.

In less than four days I was metamorphosed into a genteel young fellow, and the disguise became me exceedingly.

I asked Christina and her mother how they liked me. They protested I looked charmingly, and personated a man so naturally, that no creature would ever suspect I was any thing else. This delighted me; and I never doubted but my project would succeed according to my wishes.

I have a valet de chambre, who was always in my interest, and one you have seen at my house. I had given him orders to have Monsieur De G—— watched, and learn, cost what it would, where his mistress lived. He obeyed me, just as I could wish. In three days time, he informed me she lived in a little bye street, turning out of Faubourg Saint Honore, at a new-built house, and that my husband supped there every night. I was overjoyed at this discovery, and ordered every thing accordingly.

I was not satisfied with knowing where this girl lived; it behoved me to know when she went out, and where one might see her. I was apprised, two days after, that she often went to plays, of which she was passionately fond. My valet de chambre, who served me as footman, had got acquainted

acquainted with her's. They had drank together; and my man, who was sly, gave me sufficient intelligence, to flatter myself that it would not be so difficult a matter as I imagined to make an acquaintance with her.

They were upon the watch, to give me notice the very moment she went abroad. I had hired a waiting job by the month. At the corner of the street I waited for Miss. She was not long before she came out. My coachman had orders to follow her, and to stop at every place where she did. She entered Paris by Saint Honore Street; went and bought something at a milliner's shop; turned down Larberfel Street, and then to the play-house. There I thought I was sure of her, and was not mistaken. She was accompanied by a servant, elder than herself, but very well dressed. I could not guess whether she was a relation or her waiting-woman. There is no distinction now a days in dress; and it is difficult to discern thereby the different conditions of mankind. I could not get a full view of her, for want of a favourable opportunity; I had only a glimpse: she appeared to be tall and well-shaped; that's all I could distinguish.

I was not much better off when I came into the playhouse, although I had placed myself in one of the boxes joining to her's. It was so early, that there were but some circular lights in the boxes; nevertheless, the house was full. It was the first representation of one of M. Voltaire's tragedies. You have often heard me talk, my dear, of that illustrious author, and you may remember that I extolled him to the heavens as well as the publick. This may make you comprehend the magnificence of the entertainment, and that all the people of fashion and sense at Paris were present.

Waiting till they lighted the candles, and I could more easily examine Mademoiselle Julia, (that was her name, as my valet de chambre had informed me) I hearkened attentively to her discourse. Notwithstanding she spoke in a low voice, I heard her say to the person who came with her, that she trembled lest Monsieur De G—— should know she was at the play. I found out, from what they said, that

they had made my husband believe they were only gone to buy some things; and, according to my conjecture, it appeared he was jealous, and had a watchful eye upon his mistress. I was not sorry to find it so; it was just what I wanted, to attain the end I had proposed.

Here I interrupted Madame De G——. I have been, said I, under the greatest impatience for this half hour; therefore do me the favour, my dear lady, to tell what end it was you proposed to yourself: I will own to you sincerely, that I comprehend nothing at all of the matter.

You are very hasty, replied Madame De G—— with a smile; I have half a mind to leave you in suspense, till the incidents that are to follow have informed you; but I should make a good princess, I do not love to refuse. Know, therefore, that my design was to gain the damsel's affections, to get an assignation, and to be surprized in her company, and thereby oblige my husband to abandon her. I had still another view, which you shall not know, but in proper time and place.

As soon as the house began to be lighted up, I looked on Mademoiselle Julia with a greedy eye. I thought her charming. She had an enchanting sprightliness in her countenance. The fineness of her complexion dazzled sufficiently, without that quantity of red she laid on. Her neck was admirable, and the rest of her figure was perfectly well turned.

After this examination, I was not surprized at my husband's fondness for her. Notwithstanding I am a woman, I never was backward in doing justice to those of my sex who deserved it. I was just in regard to this person, and sensible of all that was to be seen in her.

It was no difficult matter for me to make an acquaintance with her. These creatures carry not their reserve so far as to refuse conversation. I had a long one with her; and, as she saw me compleatly dressed, and that I had something of an air of distinction, she was pleased with all I said in her commendation. I asked her leave to make her a visit. She did not absolutely grant it; but it was easy to perceive, that before the play was over she

she would not refuse it. The play began. I was so charmed with it, and heard it with so much attention, that I had like to have forgot my project. Figure to yourself, my dear child, that delicacy of sentiment was never carried to a higher pitch than what the celebrated poet affected the audience with in this tragedy. Every thing was majestick, noble, moving. The actors were more the real heroes they personated than themselves. Fancy, address, energy, of style, dignity; all these concurred in the composition of Zara. Happy, thrice happy, those who possess talents in such an eminent degree! They deserve to have monuments erected to their honour, as in former days. What do I say? In doing justice to authors of this rank, it is ourselves we honour in raising monuments to them. Is it not a monument of the good taste of that people, who knew so well whom thus to distinguish?

I took the opportunity of the intervals between the acts to obtain my request. Fair Julia seemed on purpose to delay me till the artful solution of the play, and did not grant my petition till it was over. "I have a difficulty," said she, "in admitting your visits; and that because you appear to me a dangerous man. If you were no more than an ordinary person, I should not fear you so much; but, without valuing myself for my wit, I have sense enough to discover you have a great deal, and that your conversation is enchanting. For reasons known to myself, I am obliged to grant your petition conditionally. When you are acquainted with them, you will not be surprized at the precaution I exact from you. I will even own, that I could easily inform you what my motives are. Perhaps you have conceived a good opinion of me: I could wish, if it were possible, that you might persist in it. Of this we will talk another time. For the present, I must desire, when you come to see me, that it be after dinner; and to leave it in my breast to send you away when I shall think proper."

After having had this discourse with her, she told me where she lodged. I said every thing to the fair Julia that I thought most likely to per-

suade her how much I was transported with the favour she had granted. "You men are all traitors," said she pleasantly, as she rose up; "you are the loveliest things in the world, when you take a fancy to court us; but you have no sooner succeeded, no sooner are we foolish enough to listen to you, than you become perfidious, and make us repent the regard we have been so silly as to have for you." This farewell was so gracefully spoken, that, had I been a man, there needed no more to have captivated me entirely.

I took care not to fail my appointment the next day. Little thought I of being sent away without seeing her. I found standing at the door the servant whom I saw the night before along with Julia. She shewed me into a little parlour as soon as she knew me again, and told me, that Mademoiselle would be vastly mortified for the trouble I had taken: that she had a visitor just come in, whom she did not expect, and it was not possible for her to see me that day. I immediately thought this disappointment was a concerted thing, either to excite the passion I had discovered, or to make me explain myself better. In order to make short work on it, I thought proper to begin by winning Gogo, (that was her chambermaid's name.) I gave her ten louis d'ors, which made her blush more than the most impudent discourse one could have uttered. My present had it's usual effect: it purchased her confidence. She acquainted me with what I knew as well as herself; that is to say, that Monsieur De G—— was in love with Mademoiselle Julia. "He is terribly jealous," said this wench, "and knows already that my mistress spoke to you last night at the play. She was no sooner returned home, but Monsieur De G——, who was waiting for her, made a furious noise. We have been crying almost all night long. However, matters are made up: he has not stirred out since yesterday; and, to compleat our misfortunes, he has told us of his wife's absence, which will give him, he says, an opportunity of coming here at all hours. If he thought the news would be any satisfaction to us, the poor man was very much mistaken: we are cruelly mortified."

"mortified at it. Whilst he was at Paris, we had time to breathe; he left us one part of the day to ourselves. Yes, truly, from morning till eight of the clock at night Mademoiselle was at liberty: she certainly made no bad use of it; there is not a more retired person in all the world; and, except two or three of her own sex, she now and then sees, she leads the life of a nun, Sir; she is a little treasure, never to be enough esteemed."

"My present, as you see, my dear child, had a wonderful effect. I caught at this opportunity of being acquainted with the whole affair. Come, tell me, my dear Gogo," replied I, "does Monsieur De G—— make you some amends, by his liberality, for all the vexations he gives you?"—"Why, pretty well," answered she, turning aside: "the truth is, he might do better; we know he is rich. But Mademoiselle is not mercenary; complaisance works more upon her than all the treasures in the world. For example, now; it would be the same thing as stabbing her to the heart, to offer her a gratuity; it would grieve her to the very soul, and she would certainly fall sick upon it. I know her folly on this subject, and blame her for it. What can one do? every body has their whims. Would you believe it, Sir," continued the cunning Gogo, "that I am obliged, in order to ease her of the vexation I have mentioned, to charge myself with the receipt of the presents that are made her, and to instruct persons how to behave, that they may not incur her displeasure? 'Slife! if one did but presume to offer her a purse of guineas, a snuff box, a diamond, she would that minute forbid you her presence! No, no, there is no touching there."

"But," replied I, without seeming to understand her meanings, "how did Monsieur De G—— get acquainted with her, and manage his matters so as to become her gallant?"—"Ah, Sir! ask me not about it," answered Gogo, with a flirting air; "his way of breaking the ice had like to have thrown Mademoiselle into fits; nothing was ever done in so rude a manner. He

"meets her at the opera; after ogling her there he has her followed home. The next morning, as soon as he was up, he wrote her word that he admired her; that he knew very well that she was kept by a counsellor of the parliament, and that but very indifferently he was well informed. Will you," said he to her, "do one thing? Dismiss your counsellor, and I will give you, (do but observe the brutality if you please) I will give you a thousand crowns a month: by way of preliminary I here send you a hundred louis; do as you will. Adieu, charmer: think well of this; afterwards we will be better acquainted."

"This conclusion almost made me laugh. Here I traced my husband's own likeness to the life. But," said I to Gogo, "this way of making love does not seem so brutal."—"Pardon me, Sir," said she, "that is not the way to make advances to a woman of her great merit; and if we had not found means of correcting Monsieur De G——, he had never set his foot in this house again."

"Tell me, then," said I, "how you compromised matters, for you seem to me a girl of real merit?"—"You are pleasant, Sir," replied Gogo: "I pretend to no sort of merit; but I know the world a little. I undertook to go the next morning to Monsieur De G——; I told him Mademoiselle was extremely angry at his letter and his hundred louis; that, but for me, they would have been sent back again; and that I was forced to exert all the credit I had with her, to keep her in any degree of moderation."

"Monsieur De G—— was rude enough to answer me, that he did not think there needed all this ceremony to huddle up a love-affair with a wench to be had for money. Truly, Sir," said the cunning Gogo, "I had a mind to fly at his throat; I gave him what he deserved; and, after a thousand bitter reproaches, I fell a crying. My tears rendered Monsieur De G—— more tractable; he begged me to make his peace with my mistress, and to let him know in what he had offended her; swearing, by his strong-box, that he had behaved to her in the same manner as

“to many more, except that he had never as yet made so handsome an offer to any body. “To convince thee of it,” said he, (take notice of that *thee*) “I will let thee see the rough draught of the letter I wrote to her, and which I made use of for above these thirty years for the like purpose.” He shewed it me accordingly. “It was so foiled, that I easily believed it had been composed full as long ago as he said.

“He wanted to know, after that, why my mistress had been so angry with him. “Because your letter,” said I, “had like to have ruined her: that she was come of a good family, not very rich, to speak the truth; but for that very reason it is she is tampering with the counsellor, who has promised to marry her, and who you think keeps her. After all this, judge yourself, if she is angry without reason.”—“Oh! that is another affair,” cried Monsieur De G——; “but I am not the less sorry, for I am in love with the wench.”—“Truth, Sir,” said I, “that very word *wench* is enough to have you thrown out of the window, had it been spoken before my mistress. If you have that regard for her, you ought really to make use of politer expressions; they would have as much weight as the offers you have made.”

“What shall I say to you, Sir?” said Gogo, whom my *louis-d’ors* had set a chattering like a magpye. “I gave Monsieur De G—— to understand, that I had with much difficulty gained so far upon my mistress, as to make her think it was worth her while to give him encouragement, and that his frankness was a sure proof of his being a man of honour. I told him, besides, that I had managed so well, as to contrive an interview for the next day; and that, if he behaved himself handsomely, the counsellor would be dismissed, provided he paid down to me (not to Mademoiselle, who would not receive any thing as coming from him) a whole year’s advance. What shall I say more? Every thing was concluded according to my direction; and from that time Monsieur De G—— has been lord and master here. By degrees I have brought him to humour Mademoiselle. Whenever

“he makes her a present, it must either be put into one of her dressing-boxes, or into my hands. No thanks are returned for it; and as he does things pretty generously, we bear with him.”

“I was sufficiently instructed by this prodigy of a waiting-maid, not to be at a loss concerning my husband. I asked her, after what manner she could contrive me an interview with her mistress. She assured me it should be the next day, at the same hour; and that if the jealous man were so cruel as to be there again, I should receive a note to be at a third house she should appoint me, and whither she would come to me, under the first pretence that occurred.

“I judged from this discourse, and from what happened to me the next day, that my affairs were in a right channel. I found Julia alone: she seemed to have drawn forth all her charms to compleat her conquest over me. I repeat again, had I been of a different sex, I must have loved her. She shewed a modesty and sweetness in her conversation that charmed me. I advanced through all the gradual progressions of love with her, not without fearing she would push it too briskly; and I had my reasons not to draw it to a certain period, which I carefully avoided.

“Nothing, as you see, dear child, could go on better than my affairs. All that remained farther to be done, according to my scheme, was to hazard the desiring an assignation at night, and so to have myself surprized in Julia’s company. Will you believe me, that when I was upon the point of doing it, there arose within me such a tenderness towards this girl, that I hesitated above four days? She had given me so endearing a reception, she seemed to love me so sincerely, and I had discovered such a fund of wit and good sense in her, that I thought it a piece of cruelty not to be paralleled, to contrive the ruin of so amiable a person. I put it off from day to day: in short, I could not come to a resolution.

“On the fifth day that I had been under these agitations, Julia sent to invite me to dinner; she knew where I lived. As soon as we had dined, she gave orders to Gogo to tell Monsieur De G——, if he should take a fancy

“fancy to come, that she was gone out, and did not know where. “He will play the devil,” said she; “but that is no matter, we will find ways to appease him. This day will I dedicate to the peaceful enjoyment of my dear Minèt:” (this was the familiar name she had given me, and she well deserves I should make her this sacrifice.) It was with trembling I thanked her for this favour. “I am undone!” said I to myself: “how shall I behave, if she should——” In a word, dear child, I never was so much put to it in all my life.

“But charming Julia’s first words restored me. “I have no mind,” said she, “to be disturbed, being determined to discover to you the secret motions of my soul. Do you know that I love you; and can you guess how you have stole into my heart?” —“No, certainly.” —“By your discretion! Would you think, dear Minèt, seeing the life I lead, that I oftentimes reflect, and spend whole days in tears?” This overture affected me. “Speak, Julia!” said I, moved with pity: “you amaze me! This is what I little expected. What are your grievances? Can I be so happy as to put an end to them?”

“Yes, my dear Minèt,” replied the sorrowful Julia in tears; “you are the only person in the world who can restore my peace; after which I daily sigh. But first hear my story; it will not be tedious.

“To the amours of Monsieur Le —, a general officer, and of Mademoiselle La R——, the celebrated actress, I owe my birth. I was privately brought up by a woman who had lived with my mother; but falling into bad circumstances, she left me to the wide world. She has been dead these four years; and I still continue to live, as you see, without money, without protection, without assistance. It has not yet been in my power to quit a life which I detest. Would you think that I am doing penance in the high road to perdition? Would you imagine, dear Minèt, that the address of a man is to me a torture? And if it continues much longer, despair will drive me into the most frightful extremity!

“You seem surprized, and not without reason. You will answer me,

“without doubt, that there is nothing easier than to abandon such a course of life, which I myself condemn, and is highly scandalous: but, my dear Minèt, I have been brought up in some plenty, from whence I have contracted a habit. The idea of wanting even superfluities carries horror with it; my table always well furnished, and I have been waited on all my life. If I change my conduct, there’s an end of all at once, and I shall be reduced to extreme want. These, my dear Minèt, are the considerations that overwhelm me, and detain my disorders. This is a great deal; but I am going to surprize you much more.

“It is now about a year, when being more than ever alarmed at the state I was in, I made a firm purpose of altering it, and of doing my utmost to break loose from those infamous bonds with which I was fettered. Fully determined, I went one day into a church; sent for a doctor, with an intention to consult him upon my situation, and to engage him, after a sincere acknowledgment of all my past faults, to take compassion of me, and to find some charitable means of extricating me for ever from the life I led.

“He heard me with all the attention he was capable of; insisted on my making, by way of preliminary, a general confession; and, whilst I was preparing for it, to refrain from all irregularity. He concluded with saying, he would use all his endeavours to procure me some honest means of subsisting.

“I resigned myself entirely to his advice. As soon as I came home I discharged my servants, sold all my furniture, dismissed a lover who provided for me, and retired some distance from the town, with a firm resolution of remaining concealed, living in a retreat, and of abandoning the world and its deceitful joys.

“My director was three months without giving me absolution, under pretence of knowing if what I called a conversion might not be a disgust, which would wear off in a few months. He persisted all this time in refusing me a blessing, which I so ardently desired, and which I re-

“garded as the seal of my approaching tranquillity. I sometimes bemoaned myself on that account; but nothing could move him. During these delays, I saw the little I had diminishing daily, what money I had was just spent; I foresaw that I was going to be destitute of all relief, and gave myself up to melancholy. Would you guess what occasioned all these delays in my director? He waited till I was reduced to the last extremity, to make proposals of a most impious and a most detestable nature. Shall I own it to you, my dear Minet? He was fallen in love with me; he was bold enough to declare it, and that in such an impious manner as covered me with confusion and horror. I drove him shamefully from my sight, telling him, that if he durst return and offer to speak to me again, I would make him repent what he had done, and make my complaints, that he might be punished by his superiors according to his deserts.

“But what was I preparing for myself? The miscreant not having the fear of God before his eyes, could there be hopes of his standing corrected? No, my dear Minet; he was so provoked at my steadiness, that he swore he would be revenged, and he punctually kept his word.

“I had passed the remainder of that day in tears, and had resolved to seek some clergyman, whose reputation of religion and piety might shelter me from such misfortunes as had lately happened to me, when about dusk an exempt with several assistants came and carried me off. They did not give me time to inform myself of their reasons for this violence. I was hurried to prison; and it was three months before I was enlarged.

“I easily imagined from whence this stroke came. I conceive, my dear Minet, that you can very well guess at it. It was to no purpose to justify myself, and to tell those who had confined me the occasion of my being secured. They looked on all I said as an idle invention: it made no impression; and they did not so much as make a report of it.

“The first thing I did, after I was set at liberty, was to go and return God thanks. I learned from my

“landlady, that there was a famous preacher, who, besides that, passed for one of the ablest directors. I went; I acquainted him with my history. He conceived a horror at the proceedings of my wicked confessor: he took three days to resolve upon what could be done for me; at the end of which he told me, he had thought of something to enable me to end the remainder of my days in peace and tranquillity.

“I did not stay to ask him what it was. So happy did I think myself to be rescued from want, of which I even then began to feel the effects, that I threw myself at his feet, assuring him that I should be eternally obliged to him, and that I would never cease to pray to Heaven for his preservation.

“But what do you think he had done for me, my dear Minet? You will be full as much surprized at it as I myself then was. O Heaven! is it thus your ministers distribute the pious contributions of the well-disposed? The clergyman bid me be the next day at a convent called *Les Filles du bon Pasteur*, that he would meet me, and would lay down what was required for my subsistence as long as I lived.

“I was enraged at this proposal, for I detested a convent; besides, I knew from a friend of mine formerly what sort of a house this was; and that, in order to be admitted, one must own one's self to have been a common prostitute. I stifled both my grief and astonishment. I had been too severely treated by my former director, to dare to put myself in a way of making this man repent of his goodness towards me: I was convinced besides, that too much zeal was often as dangerous as too little virtue. I went away, after I had promised to be the next day at the place appointed; but with a firm resolution of forfeiting my word, and never more to think of seeking consolation in the bosom of such people, in whom so much is wanting to render them humane and compassionate.

“I returned home oppressed with sorrow, and a desponding heart, full of all that had happened to me since my sincere desires of a conversion. After a thousand cruel reflections,

“I wrote

"I wrote to Gogo, the servant you now see about me; I knew where she lived. She came, or more properly flew to me. She had ever had a tender regard for me; of which she gave me marks after I had with tears imparted to her all that happened to me. Instead of making me any answer, she quitted my room with as much haste as she had entered it. I thought at first, that seeing me in misery and distress, she deserted me; but, just Heaven! how much reason had I to repent me of too hasty and too unfavourable a judgment! I heard, about a quarter of an hour afterwards, a coach stop at the door; it was Gogo: she brought me whatever she could scrape together; and, giving it, said it was all my own, bid me make use of it, and that she should think herself too happy to spend her days with her dear mistress. I gratefully embraced the good creature, and swore to her, that let what would happen we would never part more.

"Assuredly, when I compared her zeal with that of the ecclesiastics whom I mentioned, had I not room to think that one often finds christian charity lodged in very improper places? But where is the wonder of that? The greater part of those who are appointed to practise it, and be it's distributors, abuse and drive it away, if I may say so, by a wrong application. It needs must find an asylum, and refuge itself somewhere or other.

"This, my dear Minet, is my history; from whence you may easily comprehend how much I abhor my present situation. I am very desirous of changing it; but the methods of doing it appeared so difficult, from the first steps I took, that I durst no more attempt it, and that I have persisted till now in the state of life you see."

"I was moved even to tears at what Julia related. I waited with impatience to know what might be her views on me, and why she had given me the preference, in assisting on an occasion wherein I seemed so improper a person to be employed.

"She did not make me wait long. "You will scarce believe," said she, "that you are the only one in the world

"on whom I depend to draw me from the precipice into which I am fallen. "You have so often assured me of your love, and this with so much discretion, that I flatter myself you will afford me the most convincing proof. Assist me, Sir, in taking that step I most desire; I only ask your protection. The money Monsieur De G—— has bestowed on me, since he has visited me, is sufficient to set me up in a way of business, changing my name, place of abode, and conduct. I have admitted disorder only to enable me to fly from it. Some money I have saved; and with what my goods will produce, I reckon to make up a sum of ten thousand livres: it is but a small matter, yet sufficient to begin with. Marry I will not, neither will I become a nun; one is as hateful to me as the other: what I desire, is to carry on a trade, in order to make the most of my pittance, and afford me enough to live comfortably and honestly in the world. In you alone I place my confidence: if you love me sincerely, you will not refuse me your advice and assistance; I take you for a man of too much honour and principle to give me any distrust."

"I was preparing to answer these requests, and to applaud Julia for her sentiments, which I so much approved, when we heard Gogo screaming at the door, and doing all she could to hinder Monsieur De G—— from coming in. He had learned in the neighbourhood that Julia was not gone out; and, moreover, that there came a well-dressed gentleman just at dinner-time. This had roused his jealousy. He had got in, in spite of all Gogo could say to him, although she had given him her word that she would inform him where her mistress was, and that with a design of getting rid of him, and giving me time to get off; but she could not prevail. Monsieur De G——, who was in a passion, brought up his servants, and bid them break open the door where we were. This was what made the uproar.

"Julia gave herself over for lost. "Ah, Sir!" said she to me, "take pity on me, or I am ruined. If this brute finds me here with you, he
"will

"will have no mercy on my life." I encouraged her; for I was sure that I had infallible means of appeasing his wrath. I came to a resolution whilst Julia was speaking; and I was not sorry for what had happened.

In the mean time they were hard at work to force the door. I bid Julia assure Monsieur De G—— through the door, that she would immediately open it, provided he would send away his servants, and not make such a disturbance, advising her at the same time to be sure to scold first, making as if he had wakened her out of her sleep. I told her besides, that I would hide myself, and that if he presumed to use her ill I would soon fly to her assistance. She followed my advice, and played her part very well. Scarce had she begun to raise her voice, but my husband lowered his. The door was opened. He maundered; but Julia was beforehand with him. She said it was mean and pitiful in him to commit such extravagances: she, for her part, had a violent head-ache, and should never forget his brutal behaviour. In fine, she said a great deal. Monsieur De G—— seeing her in a night-cap (for that was really the case) and alone, began to think he was wrong, and that he had been imposed upon, with the story of a gentleman's having come to dinner with her; he asked for him, telling her he had been so informed. She assured him that she had dined alone, and could not conceive how he was capable of crediting such idle reports.

All things went on swimmingly. But it was not my intention they should continue so. I had formed my project. Julia was just going to take Monsieur De G—— into the next apartment, under a pretence of shewing him something she had bought, when I stirred myself in such a manner, that, he heard and saw me. "Hah, hah, Mademoiselle!" cried he, "are these your tricks? Is it thus you expose me?" As he uttered these words, he gave her a box on the ear, and fell to beating her. As eager as I was in getting out from the closet to come to her relief, he had already given her fifty blows, which made her cry out most lamentably. "Sure, it is very rash and daring in you," cried I, laying hold of him and assuming a me-

nacing voice, "to treat this young lady after this fashion; and that before me too." Monsieur de G——, little dreaming to have found a spark of so much metal as I appeared, (for I had cocked my hat over my eyes) drew back a step or two, grew pale, and laying his hand on his sword, told me, that the wretch cost him dear enough to have her all to himself. "This would have done well enough some years ago," cried I, bursting into a fit of laughter, for I could not contain; "but people of your age are fit for nothing but to maintain mistresses, and such young fellows as I, to——; and, zounds!——" I could hold out no longer; my laughter spoiled all. Monsieur De G—— knew me, and was so prodigiously frightened at my presence, and finding me shut up with his mistress, as well as imagining that I could have——He was so astonished, I say, that he fell back into an easy-chair with so disconcerted a countenance, that Julia herself, who knew not the meaning of all this, nor the reason of my immoderate laughter, could not refrain, in spite of her tears, from laughing herself. She soon discovered the mystery; not only my voice gave her a suspicion, but my behaviour to Monsieur De G——. I had seated myself on his knee; instead of bitter reproaches, which he might well expect, I applauded his choice of so amiable a person as Julia, and fondly rallied him for his cruelty to her. At last he recovered from his surprize; and, mightily pleased to see things take this agreeable turn, begged to know the solution of this burlesque adventure. I related it without disguise, and finished my narration by saying, that so far from disapproving the esteem he had for the charming person, who had created me so much trouble and uneasiness, I was the first to intreat his perseverance in it; and that I hoped, in consideration to me, he never would withdraw it from her.

If what had passed so much astonished my husband, it was nothing, my dear girl, in comparison of this request: it was necessary at last to ease him of his perplexity. I made Julia repeat her story: she told it with new graces. She concluded with the most moving and reiterated intreaties, to be

drawn

drawn from the abyss wherein she was plunged. She interwove her supplications with such pious and just reflections on the affair of salvation, that Monsieur De G—— could not help being moved. We all cried in concert; and the adventure terminated in a pension for life, which Monsieur De G—— granted Julia, sufficient to make her easy for the rest of her days.

'This, dear Jenny,' continued Madame De G——, 'is the end of an adventure, on which I shall ever have reason to value myself. Julia resides always in Paris, and leads the life of an angel. I see her from time to time: she edifies me; my sole pleasure is to be with her. But the most surprizing thing is, that Monsieur De G—— is entirely reclaimed from women, and leads a life of great regularity, for which I shall bless Heaven as long as I have breath.'

We came in sight of the village where we were to dine just as Madame De G—— had finished her story. I thought of it as it really was; that is to say, no less interesting than agreeable. It furnished many reflections on necessity, which occasions disorder; and on the little care those persons take to find a proper remedy, who by their vocation and charge are obliged to do it.

That very day we arrived at Madame De G——'s seat. Monsieur De G—— received me with the greatest civility. I returned my acknowledgments with the greater pleasure, as what I had lately heard increased my regard for him. He seemed to bear his age much worse than his lady. I behaved with great complaisance. He gave me to understand I should have good company. I could not conceive what he meant; for it must be observed, he was full as mysterious as my good Mamma De G——, never so much as naming the Marquis De L. V.

After the first compliments were over, I asked after Christina, the servant I so much loved, whom I have mentioned elsewhere; she was present, and I did not know her again. She took me about the neck, and thanked me very obligingly for my kind remembrance of her. I was the more sensible of it, because the instance her mistress had given me of her virtue rendered her the more amiable and dearer to me.

They had conducted me to the apart-

ment designed me, where I was changing my cloaths, when Madame De G——, who had left me, came to know if I was ready to see some company just arrived. I answered by rising and meeting the old marquis, who entered the room, accompanied by Monsieur De G——, his son, and Saint Fal. The colour came into my face: I little expected so ceremonious a visit. The old marquis complimented me upon having recovered of my sickness handsomer than ever, as he was pleased to say. As for my lover, it was far otherwise, he could scarce be known again. The minute he saw me, he stepped back, whispered Saint Fal, and held up his finger, as much as to say, is it thus you put your tricks upon me?

I returned the old marquis compliment for compliment, and wished him joy upon his good looks. The conversation turned for a minute upon our past sickness. The old marquis rallied his son on his being so mauled. This point concerned me: I could not help taking his part myself, saying, I thought him the same as ever; to which he made no other answer than a bow. His father replied, that partial eyes saw always favourably, and that he was not at all surprized at it.

Silence ensued, because the old marquis was mute, and seemed recollected within himself. I trembled, and knew not what to think of it; but it was soon broke. My lover's father asked Monsieur De G—— if he had given orders that we should not be interrupted; to which being answered in the affirmative, he said, 'It is well.' Then casting his eyes on me, spoke as follows.

'It is high time, dear Jenny, to put an end to your troubles, and to crown your virtue: you certainly merit a fortune superior to that which you are on the point of enjoying: this I have been long convinced of, and you are accordingly dear to me; but with all your good qualities, I should never have decided in your favour out of motives of convenience, and such as regard me personally, had it not been for the proofs you have given me of your elevated sentiments. These proofs have been hitherto a mystery, and I will first of all explain it to you. I knew the passion you had for my son, as well as the excess of his towards you. It would have been too great

great a sacrifice in me to have approved of your mutual flame, without an assurance of your being both worthy of it. What means did I employ to find that out? Why, I gave you both an opportunity of sacrificing that passion to me, which from its birth created me so much uneasiness.

"I would satisfy myself by a trial arising from my son's heart, whether he deserved I should forget my own rank and publick censure out of complaisance to him; and whether I was beloved by him sufficiently to yield up to me all that was most dear to him in the world. "If I discover in my son," said I to myself, contriving the means that were to convince me, "that he loves me well enough to renounce what he doats on, then he deserves I should consent to his happiness."

"What I am going to say, will surprize you, Jenny," continued he, "when you call to mind all the steps I have seemed to take to gain your favour, and the proposals I made to marry you: but do not be deceived; it was but to try your character to the bottom, and whether a fortune in present was capable of tempting your vanity. Young people are so often ensharred by objects, artful in bringing about their own ends, that I would not suffer my son to run the risk of repenting his having given himself up to such a one: it is for that reason I watched you so narrowly, and endeavoured by all possible means to discover the inmost recesses of your heart.

"I have reason to be satisfied with my discoveries in your regard; but this was not sufficient to determine me: I wanted to know what disposition my son was in; and if Forfan had not informed me where you was hid, I should have begun by obliging my son to discover you, and to deliver you into my hands. Had I prevailed, I should have been satisfied; I should have saved both of you the many hazards you have run: but Heaven, that has punished my presumption in endeavouring to fathom, like itself, the heart of man, after shewing me the danger my son incurred, has been pleased to restore him to me, and preserve a treasure for him, with which

his life was wound up, and which was ever destined to be his.

"To compass my ends, dear Jenny, that fit of sickness, which to every one appeared to be real—"How!" cried my lover, kissing his father's hand: "the cruel condition in which I saw you, which the whole town talked of, was it nothing but a feint?"—"Yes, son," replied the marquis, "it was all a pretence. But let me go on, every thing shall be made clear.

"It was not difficult for me," continued this artful nobleman, "to act the part in question. My servants know my humour, and that I will be obeyed, and never forgive indiscreet talk. Forfan, whom I had taken again on account of the service he had done me, was let into the secret, two valets de chambre, and my surgeon. As these are the only people that approach us, it was no hard matter, with their assistance, to make the family believe whatever I pleased. Such was the mystery. My son has shewn himself worthy of what he is; he generously sacrificed what was most dear to him, to preserve his father's life. I was as much moved with this sacrifice, as I admired your complaisance for my son. That day, when Nature prevailed over your generous resolution, was I about to reward you: you were then going to be united. One minute later my son had taken the place I seemed to occupy. Your fainting away, O my dear Jenny! prevented this stroke, premeditated with so much pleasure. How much did I repent, from the dread of losing you both, my not discovering myself sooner!

"But Heaven, whom I have implored so much in your behalf," continued the worthy marquis, "by restoring you to me, puts it in my power to finish what I have begun.—Approach, my dear son," cried the marquis, rising and taking me by the hand. "Be happy; I give you Jenny: making you this present, I reckon I once more give you life!" Pronouncing these words, he seemed to melt. We both fell at his feet. I was so seized, so overjoyed, so full of I know not what, that I can no way explain the true state I was in. The marquis himself dropped a tear; Monsieur and Madame De G—, and Saint Fal, joining in this affecting

affecting scene. After some moments silence, the marquis made us rise and take our places, then continued thus.

'If you are satisfied, my dear children, truly I am not less so myself; but this is not always sufficient; decency must be observed. I have taken my measures so well, that the world shall be for ever ignorant of the real origin of my daughter-in-law. I do not mention this to humble her; she is greater by her virtue and fine qualifications than a vain birth can make her: but, considering what slaves we are to prejudice, I thought I might lawfully employ an innocent stratagem to impose upon those of my rank. Jenny shall appear well born; and, notwithstanding they bid the banns this day in her village, I have contrived matters so that they cannot discover my secret.

'In fine, every thing is ready for the celebration of a marriage so much desired: the contract you both signed, and which cost so many tears, will serve; it is drawn in your names. Thus, my dear child,' said the old marquis to me, smiling, 'you see that the uneasiness you then expressed for the marquis, and which I approved, was without foundation. Do not you remember I told you we should be all satisfied? Have I deceived you?

'It remains that I inform you,' continued my lover's father, addressing himself to me, to make every thing clear, 'that not being determined whether to carry you, I had recourse to my old friends, Monsieur and Madame De G——, as persons on whom I might depend. I knew the obligations you lay under to them, and that idea seemed so suitable, that I went immediately and acquainted them with the affair, recommending secrecy. I was very apprehensive of its taking air; after causing so much distress, and being the author of so much care and anxiety to these poor children, I thought it but just to reserve to myself the charming satisfaction of being the first to inform them of their happiness.'

Thus did the old marquis finish this delightful harangue: it renewed our marks of acknowledgment. My heart was full; but I durst not give such lively proofs of it as my lover: he threw himself twenty times at his feet, kissed

his hands as often, and spoke to him in the tenderest and fondest manner. After a proper time spent in these transports, the old marquis told me my father and mother were come; that he had sent for them, in order to assist at the celebration of my nuptials; but that I was to give them to understand that they were to return no more to their cottage, it being of the last consequence in the measures he had taken for concealing who I was. 'They shall lose nothing by the bargain,' said he to me smiling. 'I give you my estate de F—— A——, which is a hundred leagues off, (it yields twenty thousand livres a year;) you shall live there with them and your husband, till I think proper to have you nearer me. Your father and mother shall remain there, and be lords and masters: this will make amends for the loss of their own country. You will have time enough to instruct them in the journey how they must behave.' It is not difficult to assume an air of ease, when one is so effectually. How sensible was I of so much goodness! Should I endeavour to express it, the task would be endless.

Hitherto I never had an opportunity of owning to the old marquis that Barbara was my aunt; I did it now. 'Well, so much the better,' continued that dear and worthy father of my lover, 'we shall render one more person happy.'

The old marquis informed us moreover, (for every thing cannot be said at once) that he had only brought with him and retained in his service those who attended him in his pretended sickness; and as for all the rest, he had taken others in their room, to prevent any discovery. He added, that he had dismissed Forsan, knowing he was not agreeable to me; (how good was this of him!) but that he had provided so well for him, that he would have no reason to complain.

My joy was too great to admit of any resentment. I interceded for Forsan with so much earnestness, that he might partake of the common joy, as obtained his readmission. His behaviour ever after gave me satisfaction.

Madame De G——, finding all was said, proposed going to supper. Every one was willing enough. Nothing gives a better appetite than joy. It will be easily imagined, neither the marquis nor

I wanted a stomach. At table I could read impatience in his eyes. Must I blush to own I felt the same emotion? I was certainly excuseable. Besides, I was in continual dread of some unforeseen event which might crush all my hopes. I had experienced so many disappointments, that I was habituated to expect no day could pass without them; but I was mistaken: every thing has its time; ill fortune itself will at last be weary of persecuting us.

The moment supper was done, I flew to my apartment, and locked myself up with Barbara, my father and mother. I immediately fell at their feet, owning myself their daughter and niece, and asking pardon for my not discovering myself sooner; alledging the reasons of it in a short but succinct manner. The reader must imagine their surprise and transports. They cried for joy, when I acquainted them with the happiness designed for me. My mother, pressing my cheeks to her's, sometimes cried out, 'God be praised!' Then again, 'I always told you, husband, she would prove a good girl!' Our time was too short to be employed in these mutual endearments: I told them in two words what was intended for them; then proposed to my dear aunt, who could scarce persuade herself I was her niece, either to follow me, or return to her beloved village; offering her my father's house, and to buy a piece of land to it. 'No, no,' said she very honestly, 'I am for no village where you are not to be, my dear niece, since Providence will have me to call you so. Your secret would be well kept, truly, were I to return to my village! To be plain with you, I should hunt out every gossip in the

place, beginning with Mr. Curate, to be sure, as our betters must be served first. I am old Tell-truth.' I could not forbear smiling at her simplicity; nevertheless, I intreated her to be on her guard for my sake. Her answer was, that I had nothing to fear whilst she was out of her own village, as I had experienced from the time I had lived with her.

During this, somebody knocked at the door: it was the impatient marquis. 'Every thing is ready,' said he through the key-hole; 'they wait for you.' The door being opened, he caught me round the neck, and kissed me so eagerly, that I blushed very much. 'Nay,' cried he, 'you must not be angry now.' Saying this, he embraced my father, mother, and aunt, with great tenderness, calling them by their names, and concluded with saying to me, 'What is it we stay for?' His abrupt impatience made me smile; and I followed him with a light heart to the church, where every thing was ready to unite us for ever.

In fine, we were married. What did not follow from that charming ceremony? I am silent; it is sufficient to say, that it is ever fresh in my memory. The old marquis's scheme was followed to a tittle. Our carriage occasioned various speculations; but they occasioned no impression on the marquis or me, entirely taken up with promoting our own happiness. Two sons and a daughter were the fruit of our mutual loves. Amidst the great world, my family employs all my time; there centers my happiness. My husband, ever tender, complaisant, and fond! Can I conclude with a more endearing and interesting circumstance?

F I N I S.



THE FORTUNATE COUNTRY MAID.

MEMOIRS

OF A

MAGDALEN;

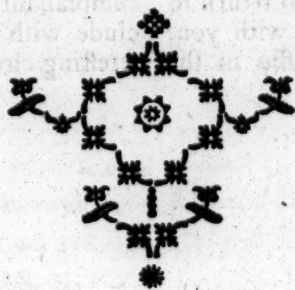
OR, THE

HISTORY

LOUISA MILD MAY.

BY HUGH KELLY, ESQ.

IN TWO VOLUMES.



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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

TO HER GRACE

THE

DUCHESS OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

MADAM,

HAD your grace been only a Duchess, the author of these little volumes had sought some other patronage, and declined to pay that respect to your rank which he now addresses to your virtues. His book, Madam, is intended to support the interest of morality, and is not dedicated to your grace because you are one of the greatest, but because you are one of the best characters in England.

He will not, however, to do an unnecessary justice to the excellence of your grace's heart, give a real wound to the delicacy of your sentiments. There is a generous inconsistency in exalted minds; and those are always most averse to receive the tribute of praise who are always most solicitous to deserve it.

On these accounts, Madam, the author of *LOUISA MILD MAY*, though he has so ample a field for encomium, avoids the customary
strain

strain of dedication; and yet he fears you will gain but very little by his caution in this respect, since the whole world will be loud in it's admiration of your grace, notwithstanding the silence of your grace's

Most devoted and

most humble servant,

Middle-Temple,
MARCH 31, 1767.

HUGH KELLY.



THE
HISTORY
OF
LOUISA MILD MAY.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

LETTER I.

SIR ROBERT HAROLD TO CHARLES
MELMOTH, ESQ.

DEAR CHARLES,



YOU desire me to be very particular during my stay at Bath, in giving you an account of the gallantries carried on at this celebrated theatre of pleasure; as if there could be any thing in the customary round of amour, sufficiently interesting to a man of sense; or, as if I had nothing in nature to do but to play the impertinent Argus upon all my acquaintance, merely to have the mighty pleasure of writing incessantly to the worshipful Charles Melmoth, Esq. and no other inclination, but to feast that philosophick sensualist with stories of contented cuckolds and perfidious lovers, together with the long list of romantick girls, who place the warmth of their constitution to the account of destiny, and kindly curse the poor stars whenever their Strephons become surfeited.

Indeed, Charles, I have too much business on my own hands, to trouble myself with the affairs of other people; therefore, unless you are determined to be satisfied with such casual intrigues as I engage in myself, my correspon-

dence will be scarcely worth reading to a fellow of your eternal curiosity. That this, however, may not dispirit you too much, you may recollect what a propensity I have to be particular with every woman who is fool enough to admit of my familiarity. Therefore, in this precious spot, as there is likelihood enough of employment, you may now and then, probably, receive some accounts sufficiently interesting to keep you from yawning in your great chair after dinner; a custom which will at last make you share the fate of the famous Charles Johnson, who, if we may credit Mr. Pope, fell an absolute martyr to obesity.

I was interrupted in my letter by a card from Lady Haversham, desiring me to be at tea in the afternoon; and, intimating that there were some very handsome young ladies to pass the evening with her: an inducement which, she said, would secure her the pleasure of my company; for she justly enough observed, that the circumstance of her being my sister might render me otherwise indifferent about the invitation. You know well enough, Melmoth, what pains I always take in the decoration of my outside; and you have a thousand times sworn that I am the most egregious coxcomb in the kingdom. Perhaps I am; and yet, between ourselves, I have always found this coxcombry of
infinite

infinite service, not only among the women, but among the very men, highly soever as the generality of them seemed to despise an attention to the elegance of externals. How often have I chuckled, when you and I walked together in the streets, (you in a rusty black frock, and I perhaps in a magnificent suit of embroidery) to see, notwithstanding all your contempt of dress, with what an unceasing assiduity you kept hold of my arm, and endeavoured, upon the merit of your companion's coat, to be thought a man of consequence by the vulgar. In proportion to the shabbiness of your own appearance, you thought yourself obliged to make a benefit of mine; and, how frequently have you swelled up with an air of the most conscious importance, when some shopkeeper has observed, with an audible voice, that there was no doubt, for all the rustiness of your coat, but that you were somebody, or you would never be so familiar with so well dressed a gentleman. Ah, Melmoth, Melmoth! you philosophers are actuated as much by vanity as the most mincing fopling in the universe. Your very contempt of appearance is the absolute result of your pride, though you would willingly put it down as the consequence of your sense, or the effect of your humility; and I am perfectly satisfied that Diogenes in his tub was fifty times a greater coxcomb than Alexander, though the puppy ridiculously affected to look down on the conqueror of the world, and mistook for an exalted emanation of soul what was nothing but a despicable folly of impertinence. All this, Charles, you will possibly say, is very true, but at the same time I am rather apprehensive you will tell me it is very dull also. I shall therefore consult your amusement in preference to your instruction, and for once suffer sober sentiment to make room for flimsy narrative.

Well, then, about seven o'clock I dressed myself in a very elegant suit of blue velvet embroidered with silver, and went in a chair to my sister Haversham's, where I found a large company of both sexes; and in justice to the intimation contained in her card, I must acknowledge that I never saw a group of handsomer women in my life. One in particular engaged my utmost attention, whom I soon found to be Louisa

Mildmay of Oxfordshire, the celebrated toast, who, though no more than twenty-one, has made the whole county a thousand times drunk; and occasioned four duels, in which two hot-headed blockheads were actually killed, and a third so disabled by a wound in his hip, as to be doomed for life to crutches and repentance.

As I had often heard of this young lady's beauty, and was moreover told that she affected an insensibility to the most engaging efforts of gallantry, I resolved to exert my utmost abilities in hopes of making some little impression on her bosom; as I considered that it would greatly add to my character among the women if I could possibly succeed with one who was looked upon by both sexes with an equal mixture of envy and admiration. Actuated by this motive, my business was to work upon her pride without exciting her resentment; and to shew that, irresistible as she had hitherto proved, there was one man who could nevertheless behold her with indifference. I therefore behaved to her with all the politeness of the most distant civility, while I sung, chatted, and romped with little Harriot Townly; and paid, in short, a much greater degree of attention to every other woman in the room. The women, all highly delighted with the preference which was thus given them by a well-dressed young fellow, with a title and a large estate, in a manner devoured me: Harriet Townly in particular hung about me the whole evening; and, was it not for the regard which I entertain for her brother, I do not know how far I might be tempted to carry my civilities.

As I was by much the best dressed, and, without any compliment to myself, by much the likeliest fellow in the room, Louisa could not see this palpable neglect of her beauty without the most sensible mortification; accustomed to be worshipped as a kind of divinity wherever she appeared, it was a most distressing circumstance to find her inferiors in beauty treated with a preferable degree of respect; and, probably, supposing that I should have fallen an instant conquest, like a number of others, the disappointment doubled her chagrin; and I could easily perceive that she cast several glances of a mingled anger and contempt at your poor friend, as if she equally saw through my purpose and despised

despised it. Be this however as it may, I retired early, to give the ladies an opportunity of talking about me; and the next morning went to breakfast at Lady Haversham's, on purpose to hear from my sister, what was said after my departure the preceding evening.

Being shewn up, who should I see, to my very great surprize, at the tea-table, but Miss Louisa! she was alone with my sister, and seemed somewhat confused at my appearance: all this, you know, had a very good sign, and gave me an additional cause to pursue a plan of operation which already wore so plausible a face of success. I therefore bowed with the coldest air of respect; and, with an inattention not altogether the most mannerly, entered into some trifling discourse with my sister, scarcely ever opening my lips to Louisa, though she kindly encouraged me, by some occasional smiles at what I said, to make her a party in the conversation. Guessing pretty clearly that, if I took my leave, I should have something worth listening to in the afternoon, I wished the women a good morning, and went away with telling Lady Haversham, that I should possibly call in on her before I went home to dress.

As you have heard so much about Miss Mildmay, Charles, I shall now proceed to do what I ought to have done somewhat sooner; that is, to give you a description of her person, and an account of her family. With regard to the first, she is to the full as tall as Mrs. Yates of Drury Lane theatre, and has a sensibility of countenance, which we hardly ever meet where features are surprizingly regular. Her eyes are full, black, and languishing; her hair is as black as her eyes; and, from the present mode of dressing, appears to so much advantage, that, was she possessed of no other personal attractions, it would be almost sufficient to procure her a crowd of admirers: her forehead is finely open, and inconceivably white; and the two exquisite arches, which are formed by her brows, give such a dignity to her looks, that none but an impudent fellow like myself could possibly see her without an instant veneration. As to her mouth, I never saw any thing so ravishing; the rosy ripeness of the lips, while it captivates the eye, receives additional beauties from the delicious poutingness of their formation;

they rise, Charles, with an equal charm both to the sight and touch, and seem no less calculated to excite emotion than to reward it. Her teeth are remarkably even, but they have not that milky whiteness which I have observed in beauties of less eminence: they have to me, however, a colour which exceeds it; they have a certain pearliness, so uncommonly clear, that you can in a manner see through them; and this I fancy is not only nearest to the genuine cast of Nature, but the best designed also for duration. Louisa is one of those delightfully formed women, whom a musselman in a phrenzy of devotion would suppose to be a daughter of paradise. With the nicest harmony of proportion, there is a voluptuous fleshiness through her person, which keeps imagination continually on fire, and would kindle the bosom of an anchorite into an instant flame of sensuality. Some people, when they talk of beauties, preposterously suppose that a fine woman must be scarcely fatter than the figure of Time over the monument of General Hargrave; for my own part, I am fond of some flesh about the bones, Charles; and would even, of the two evils, rather pay my addresses to an Egyptian mummy, than to an absolute skeleton. Miss Mildmay, however, so far from suffering the least disadvantage through this plenitude of person, acquires new charms from it; it gives a majesty to her air which bespeaks your veneration, and blends all the elevation of dignity with all the tenderness of love. Add to this, that there is a something in the very tone of her voice which indicates the woman of condition, and gives you a supposition of rank before you receive the most distant account of her family.

As to her family, it is not more ancient than respectable. She reckons among her ancestors on the father's side, the great Sir Philip Sidney; and her mother is descended from a branch of the immortal Hampden, who so resolutely opposed the infamous oppressions of that rapacious tyrant Charles the First. Her father possesses, at present, a good four thousand pounds a year; her only brother has a company in the guards, and is universally esteemed a very fine gentleman.

Notwithstanding the advantages which Miss Mildmay derives from family and
B fortune,

fortune, her education however has rather been ornamental than useful; and she is much better calculated for her present character of a toast, than for the necessary employment of mistress to a family. She speaks French and Italian; plays on the harpsicord and the guittar; and sings with an exquisite share of taste, though she has less body to her voice, than you would imagine from the melody and fulness of her tones in common conversation. These accomplishments, nevertheless, though they are generally as much as our young women of distinction possess now a days, are but very trifling matters when we come to enquire about a well-informed mind and a stability of principle. The men are not, in fact, such fools, my dear Melmoth, as the ladies may imagine; we love that they should understand French and Italian, and we listen with pleasure when they either sing us a song, or favour us with a tune upon an instrument. Yet these are all but secondary considerations: after marriage, the ornamental parts of their education, like the beauties of their faces, very quickly lessen in our esteem; and nothing maintains it's ground but sterling sense and real virtue. A woman, therefore, who studies to be the universal passion, is rather a dangerous character for a wife: composed, in a great measure, of affectation and levity, her principal study is to please those who are labouring to destroy her, and the only person whom she declines to oblige, is the unfortunate poor devil who is continually solicitous to promote her felicity. For these reasons, when I marry I shall look out for a woman whose mind has been improved in some proportion with her person. If mere externals were able to captivate me, I do not know a lady in the world whom I would sooner think of than Miss Mildmay. But this rage for admiration, which I fear absorbs all her faculties, forbids me to entertain any thoughts of settling with her for life: I could by no means bear the imputation of imaginary infidelity in my wife; and Cæsar himself could not be more delicate in this respect, when he said that it was not enough for his wife to be virtuous, she must be unsuspected also.

When I look back upon the unconscionable length of this letter, I wonder how I found inclination to write so

much; if, however, you find inclination to read it, I shall not think my time misapplied, since I am, dear Melmoth, yours very faithfully,

ROBERT HAROLD.

LETTER II.

SIR ROBERT HAROLD, IN CONTINUATION, TO CHARLES MELMOTH, ESQ.

PURSUANT to the intention which I had intimated of calling in upon my sister Haversham before dinner, I took but a turn or two round the rooms, and then went back to her house, where I had the good fortune of finding her alone; a circumstance which afforded me a proper opportunity of making the necessary enquiries after Louisa. As you know my sister is a woman of great sentiment and delicacy, I was obliged to begin in a round-about manner, and therefore carelessly observed that we had a very agreeable party the preceding evening.

'Why, Bob,' says she, 'I should scarcely suppose that to be your real opinion, by the hurry in which you took leave of the company; but, pray, what was the actual reason,' and here she looked with a peculiar significance of feature, 'that robbed us so early of a man devoted to the service of the ladies? I was in hopes your complaisance to them would have detained you a little longer, if you were influenced by no regard for me; but I can guess: I know that consummate vanity of yours too well, not to think you were laying out some fresh baits for the foolish women who honoured you with so peculiar a distinction. You wanted to give them an opportunity of talking about you after you were gone; and are now come to hear the whole substance of their conversation, from a sister who can keep nothing a secret from you, notwithstanding she is acquainted with the licentious turn of your disposition, and heartily laments it.'

'My dear Lady Haversham,' returned I, 'how can you possibly treat me with so much severity? Business of the most pressing nature forced me from you last night; and this morn-

ing,

ing, to convince you that nothing but the result of a brotherly affection induced me to call——'

'Ah, Bob, Bob!' interrupted she, 'don't I know you? or, if I did not, the design is too palpable to elude the eye of a common penetration. But, be that as it will, what do you think of Louisa Mildmay?'

'Think of her, Lady Haversham!'

'Aye, think of her, Lady Haversham!'

'—Come, come, I saw, under all that gallantry which you threw away on the other ladies last night, that your design was in a great measure to pique her. Had she been wholly indifferent to you, you would have treated her with common civility. But I saw, and I saw with pleasure, that at the very first sight she made an impression, which I hope in a little time will be attended with the most salutary consequences. The truth is, my dear Bob, I can never be happy while you remain unmarried; the continual excesses into which you are hurried by an unfortunate spirit of gallantry fill me with a perpetual regret: you know I love you with a tenderness, perhaps, as great as ever sister felt for a brother, and am doubly sensible of all your accomplishments. It therefore cuts me to the soul when I see a young fellow of your merit prostituting those talents in the destruction, as well of his own happiness as the happiness of other people, which might be rendered equally creditable to himself and advantageous to society. On this account, I have been for some time looking out for a woman, whose beauty might be able to secure your affection, whose merit might be able to engage your esteem, and whose family might be able to give you an increase of consequence in your country. These very desirable requisites I find will be all answered in a union with Louisa Mildmay. What say you, then, my dear Bob? Can you, for once, turn that fine sense, of which I know you master, to the certain means of establishing your real happiness; or will you still persist, in opposition both to your reason and your humanity, to prosecute such courses as you cannot view without contempt, nor consider without detestation.'

'Upon my word, Lady Haversham,' replied I, 'you would make an admirable——' 'Come, come, Bob,' returned she, 'do not endeavour to ridicule an argument which you are unable to answer; nor, by an untimely affectation of wit, attempt to lessen the credit of your own understanding. Answer me, therefore, directly to the question—What do you think of Miss Mildmay?'

I do not know how it was, Melmoth, but the good sense and unaffected tenderness of this amiable sister, at that moment threw me off my guard. By the exertion of an irresistible frankness, she rendered me as ingenuous as herself; and I candidly told her that I thought Louisa one of the most charming women I had ever seen; adding, however, at the same time, that I fancied she possessed rather too great a consciousness of her own accomplishments, to think of domesticating into the mistress of a family.

Lady Haversham to this replied, that I was entirely mistaken; that Louisa was at the bottom a woman of fine sense, and would make an admirable wife whenever she altered her condition. 'I will not, indeed,' says Lady Haversham, 'take upon me to say, that a young creature so universally admired can be entirely exempted from a little female vanity. You men are strange contradictions: you are for ever endeavouring to fill all the silly girls of your acquaintance with a thousand ridiculous notions of their own beauty; and yet the moment you see this insidious train of flattery take fire, you despise them for their vanity, without once good-naturedly recollecting that this vanity is principally occasioned by yourselves. As to Miss Mildmay, if you have no other objection, I promise you there is but little to apprehend on this account. When her affections become once directed to a particular object, her fondness for admiration will naturally cease: so that, with her regard for the man she marries, joined to the sense which she must entertain of her duty, there can be no doubt but what she will perform all the offices of a wife with the strictest propriety: at least, this is my opinion of her; and I dare say you are convinced that, unless she stood very high in my esteem, I should not be so earnest

‘in recommending her to your tenderest consideration.’

From the solicitude which my sister discovered in this affair, Charles, I was half inclined to think that the beautiful Louisa was already actually struck with my person and address, and had insinuated something to my advantage during her visit in the morning. I therefore dropped a distant hint of this nature; and, with an air half gay and half serious, enquired of Lady Haversham, whether she thought there was any hope of Miss Mildmay's concurrence, in case a treaty should be opened between the two families. To this Lady Haversham replied, that I must first declare myself a lover, before she could think of giving me any satisfactory answer on this head; that, was she even possessed of secrets, she would not sacrifice a lady's delicacy to any consideration; and wondered how I could think of participating in her confidence, while I held her at such a distance from mine. Upon the whole, she believed Miss Mildmay might perhaps be disengaged; and that, if I really entertained a passion for her, she did not see why I had a worse chance of succeeding than any body else.

This, Charles, is the present situation of affairs: I have since been twice in company with Louisa, and find the young baggage every moment growing on my imagination. I do not know how it is; matrimony has a frightful sound with it, and yet I am determined some time or other to be married. We are all, however, for putting the evil day as far off as possible. At what particular period my knot is to be tied I know not; but I fancy the period is not very remote, for every time I think of Miss Mildmay, I begin to be more reconciled to the reasonableness of the marriage ceremony. By and by, perhaps, I shall call it, in my sister's language, a holy institution; and think of bespeaking some such clumsy varlet as yourself to stand godfather to one of my children.

Egad, Charles, the plot, as Bayes says, begins to thicken. Mr. Mildmay and his lady are just come to Bath, with a view of taking their daughter home in a week; so that what I do must be done speedily. Upon my soul, I did not conceive how near this girl was to my heart till I was alarmed with the news of our speedy separation! Lady Haversham's

whole soul, I am sensible, is in the affair; and you need not be informed what a tenderness I bear for that amiable sister. You see, Charles, how I want to make a merit of following my own inclination. But adieu, my dear boy: I am preparing to attend the adorable Louisa to an assembly this evening, where I shall have her for a partner. How all the fellows will envy my happiness, Melmoth! especially as I shall seize some favourable opportunities of whispering such a story in her ear, as will add considerably more than the nature of our entertainment, to heighten the beauty of her complexion. Yours,

R. HAROLD.

LETTER III.

MISS LOUISA MILDMAV TO MISS HARRIOT BEAUCLERK.

THE sweet fellow, my charming friend, has at last declared himself—and in such a manner! Well, if I was at first struck with the elegance of his figure, I am now ravished with the beauties of his conversation; and shall think myself the happiest of all human beings, if an alliance can be fortunately brought about between our families.

In my last letter I told you what a very warm interest I have with the Countess of Haversham, his sister; and that she had sounded him in relation to his sentiments of me, without giving him the least intimation of my having any knowledge of her design. The obliging countess executed her commission with the utmost delicacy and address, and easily discovered that all the attention which he paid to that Miss Townly, the first night of our acquaintance, was nothing more than the customary effects of his vivacity. She also discovered, that he thought me infinitely handsome, (that was his very word) but she feared he would struggle as much as possible with his inclinations, as he seemed to think it unlikely I should have still retained my heart in the midst of such numberless admirers (her ladyship was please to say) as were every day soliciting the happiness of my hand, and applying for the interest of my father. However, she was good-naturedly studious

dious to make parties to bring us together; and last night he danced with me at a ball, which was given by the French ambassador, highly to the mortification, not only of that Miss Townly, but of several other ladies, who had flattered themselves with the hope of engaging him for a partner.

During the whole course of the evening he scarcely attended to any thing but the means of obliging me. In a thousand little circumstances he manifested both his tenderness and his delicacy; and in a thousand delightful whispers insinuated such well-turned compliments, as nothing but affectation itself could possibly be offended with. Whenever he touched my hand, he was seized with so exquisite a tremor, as went to my very heart; and the envy, which he visibly excited in the bosom of almost every other woman in the room, gave him such an additional charm, that he appeared as much an Oroondates to my fancy, as if I had been a heroine in some romance, and was but newly delivered from the dungeon of a merciless giant, in consequence of his prowess and magnanimity.

I have before told you, that the first time I ever saw Sir Robert Harold was at the playhouse here; and that the chastisement which he there publicly bestowed on two young officers who rudely pushed a lady down, and seemed rather inclined to defend than to apologize for their brutality, was what riveted him in my affection. Yet, Harriot, were you to see the dear fellow, you would be charmed with him. In his person he is tall; but not so tall as to be inelegant in the least, nor so much inclined either to the extremes of corpulence or delicacy, as to be awkward on the one hand, or effeminate on the other: in short, the medium is so happy as to give the clearest idea imaginable of manliness and grace; and his legs are so admirably formed—indeed, Harriot, I do not believe there is a finer made man in the universe.

As to his face, there is no possibility of doing it justice in the description. You may perhaps imagine that I am on this occasion actuated by the partiality of a giddy-headed girl, who, having once confessed herself enamoured of a man, thinks it absolutely necessary, for the credit of her taste, to paint him as the invariable standard of per-

fection. Indeed, Harriot, I have no necessity to be under so ridiculous an influence: Sir Robert is so much the every thing I could wish him to be, that exaggeration would be as useless as it is impossible, and only betray the excess of my weakness, without adding in the least to the credit of his attractions. His face, however, my dear, is distinguished with a certain energy of expression, that throws out a whole soul upon every feature, and darts such an immediate meaning upon your bosom, that, had he been actually born dumb, he might have been set down as one of the first conversationists in the kingdom. Add to this, that there is an inherent stamp of condition in his air, which indicates the man of fashion, and at first sight no less engages your esteem than it excites your admiration. His complexion is a dark brown; but so delicate! His eyes are of a deep black; but replete with such sweetness and fire, that though he kills you in a manner with a glance, he throws an elysium on the wound, and lessens every suffering of your sensibility with an extasy unutterable. Do, Harriot, laugh at my flight, if you please; but remember the time is arrived, when even my sweet friend, with all her gravity, can be in over head and ears, and therefore she should allow for the hyperboles of other doating girls, by the allowances which are necessary for her own. One word more about externals, and I have done. You know I am a passionate admirer of fine teeth: Sir Robert has a most exquisite set; and they are always so white, that nothing can equal their beauty, in my opinion, but the lips which enclose them.

You have thus, my dear Harriot, a faint sketch of Sir Robert Harold's exterior accomplishments. As to other matters, his education is finished, his fortune is extremely large, his courage approved, and his understanding unquestionable. He has, indeed, taken some extraordinary liberties among the women; but where a man possesses so many attractions, he must frequently meet with extraordinary encouragement; and if women will be fools, it is but reasonable they should be sufferers. There is a part of his character which I know my dear Harriot will be highly taken with; and that is, though he is a great admirer of magnificence, he always

ways makes it a rule to live considerably within his fortune, and to distribute many sums towards the advancement of his poor tenants, which the most of our modern fine gentlemen injudiciously expend in horse-racing, or in some other fashionable amusement equally inhuman and ridiculous. His benevolence, in this respect, joined to the most condescending affability, has rendered him the idol of all his inferiors in the country; and, for a circuit of twenty miles round his seat in Devonshire, there is scarcely a peasant who would not venture his life for Sir Robert Harold with the utmost cheerfulness. Before ever I saw him, Harriot, I was delighted with his character; so that it was no wonder, when I did see him, if my heart paid an honest tribute to his merit, and passionately longed for a share of his regard.—Well, but to the point.

This morning he came, about twelve, to enquire after my health, and to pay the customary compliments. My papa and mamma were fortunately at a concert in the rooms, and the dear man had a whole hour at least to entertain me on a subject which few women, you know, whether they like the lover or not, ever think disagreeable. He was in a most charming undress, and looked so sweetly! You may be sure, my dear, the nature of his conversation did not take, in any great degree, from the force of his personal accomplishments.

After politely repeating his acknowledgments for the honour I had done him the preceding evening, he drew his chair close to mine; and, with an address inconceivably tender, took up one of my motionless hands, pressed it with an uncommon degree of fervor to his lips, and thus went on, delicately looking down the whole time, to prevent, as much as possible, the confusion into which I must be naturally thrown by the tendency of his declaration.

‘I would not, my charming Miss Mildmay, have presumed thus early to make you acquainted with my sentiments, had not the shortness of your stay at Bath obliged me, in some measure, to break in upon the niceties of decorum, and rendered it in a manner necessary for me to seize the present opportunity of coming to an explanation, since it is more than probable I may never meet with another so favourable to my hopes. A

‘lady like you, Madam, who have been so long and so properly the object of universal admiration, cannot be any way surprized at finding a new adorer in every new acquaintance: but I will not address you in the hacknied forms of common-place courtship, nor offer a violence to that delicacy which is always the companion of superior merit, by entering into an unnecessary descant upon those accomplishments, to which nothing but the grossest stupidity can possibly be a moment insensible or unjust. From the first hour, Madam, I saw you, I passionately loved; and, though the disregard which you constantly manifested to the solicitation of numbers superior to myself, both in merit and in fortune, made it doubly presumptuous in me to aspire at such a blessing as your hand; still, so long as you appeared wholly disengaged, I thought it would be a mark of veneration to you, as well as an act of justice to myself, to make a profession of my everlasting attachment, and to enquire whether it would be possible for a length of time, and an undeviating assiduity, to procure me a distant glimmering of success.

‘My sister, whom I made the confidante of my passion, indeed advised me to an application to Mr. Mildmay; but, as a step of that nature might perhaps interfere with some wish of the beautiful Louisa’s, I would on no account hazard it without her permission. Young ladies very frequently see matters in a juster light than their fathers; and there are a thousand little reasons for consulting them on the business of their own hearts, before a treaty is opened with their relations. On this account, my ever adorable Miss Mildmay, I throw myself entirely upon your generosity. If you have any latent motive for wishing me to decline a farther solicitation on this subject, be candid and tell me so. The man before you, Madam, would scorn to purchase the happiness even of his whole life, by the prosecution of any suit in the least incompatible with your tranquillity: he may be miserable, but he never will be mean; and has too high an idea of Miss Mildmay’s benignity, to think she would willingly add to his anxiety by an unnecessary suspense, if it is absolutely
‘out

'out of her power to think of ever removing it. You are silent, too lovely Miss Mildmay! fortunate be your silence, Madam. For the present I shall take my leave; and, if I have not your positive commands to the contrary, will do myself the honour of waiting upon Mr. Mildmay to-morrow morning.'

Well, Harriot, and what do you think now? Had not I an astonishing command of myself, never once to interrupt him during so long an address? I really think I had; but, some how, he was so respectful, and so manly; so delicately timid, yet so generously importunate; that, for the life of me, I could not say a syllable by way of reply. A man of less breeding would have been insolent at seeing me so confused; would have rudely stared me in the face, and endeavoured to read the sentiments of my heart in the various changes of my countenance; perhaps, too, he would have expected one of my best curtsies, and imagined that I ought to bid him go, in polite terms, to my father. Sir Robert Harold, my dear Harriot, is a lover of quite a different stamp; the more encouragement he meets, the more respectful he appears, and interprets your silence into a meaning so refined, as prevents the least violence from reaching your sensibility. Pray Heaven, Harriot, I do not prove too fond of him! But, my dear girl, adieu for the present; and believe me to be, with the most unalterable attachment, your own

LOUISA MILD MAY.

LETTER IV.

SIR ROBERT HAROLD TO CHARLES
MELMOTH, ESQ.

WELL, Charles, I am just this instant come from the old gentleman: he and I came to an agreement in a moment; and he was so highly delighted with my proposal, that he even threw in a much greater addition to the girl's fortune than I could in conscience have expected. He has been a saving close-fisted codger, he tells me, these thirty years, and has had some considerable windfalls from his wife's family; he therefore can afford to give his daughter a good forty thousand

pounds, as he has no other child but his son, who will be amply provided for by the family estate and other valuable contingencies. And thus, Charles, is your friend in the high road to matrimony: a month from this day is set apart for the celebration of the nuptials; and the old gentleman has insisted upon my passing the last fortnight of that term at his house in Oxfordshire.

When we had thus agreed about settling the lawyers immediately to work, and providing the wedding-cloaths, I was introduced in form to Louisa; who, to do her justice, was scarce a remove from a divinity. Her naturally fine complexion was deepened with a most enchanting glow of consciousness; and the delicious sensibility that swam in her charming black eyes, gave her, in my opinion, an air which rendered her wholly irresistible. She received my salute with dignity, yet with condescension; and the obliging old people, very properly judging their absence would be infinitely more agreeable than their company, withdrew in a little time, and gave me an opportunity of thanking her in the most passionate terms, for making me the happiest of mankind. She was pleased, I could plainly see, with my emotion; yet she laboured under all that distress which a delicate woman is sure to feel upon the prospect of so important a change in her condition. I therefore took my leave as soon as possible, to give her an opportunity of recovering her spirits; but not before I had previously obtained her permission to drink tea with her in the evening.

And now, Charles, that the affair is thus far adjusted, let me honestly open my whole heart to you; I scarcely care a single sixpence whether it is ever brought to a conclusion. My marriage with this young lady is rather the result of my conviction than the consequence of my choice; and I find my vanity infinitely more gratified, in running away with such a prize from a crowd of contending admirers, than my happiness promoted in obtaining it for myself. With all my turn for dissipation, I am nevertheless thoroughly satisfied, that till a man becomes domesticated he never can enjoy an hour of real content. The gratifications which arise from an unlimited course of amour, even where a man is best received, never compensate for

for the trouble he is obliged to undergo in the prosecution; and he has this constant mortification to check the tide of his transport, that the woman to whom he is most strenuously attached, is frequently entitled to his abhorrence, and always to his contempt: in proportion as she adds to his pleasure, she must sink in his esteem; for before she can manifest a compliance to his wishes she must burst through every restraint of decorum and delicacy, and sacrifice all regard to her own character and the honour of her family. A woman, thus lost to sentiment, is below the consideration of any sensible man: therefore, the sooner we get out of this uncomfortable track, the sooner we lay a probable foundation for our own happiness. I am now eight and twenty years old, Melmoth, and it is high time for me to think of getting sons and daughters for myself, instead of wasting my time to increase the families of other people. Besides, I am weary of venturing my life every moment, to gratify the licentious disposition of a pack of women, who are more despicable in my opinion, and less attached to my person, than many of the mercenary poor creatures, whom I can purchase for a couple of guineas and a trifling treat at the tavern. All these considerations put together, induce me to think marriage a very desirable institution; and, as I never knew what it was to be heartily in love, I think I have as fair a chance for felicity with this beautiful girl I am engaged to as with any body else. My reason, to say nothing of my vanity, therefore is much more concerned in the affair than my inclination. Before I was sure of her, I really felt some anxieties on her account; but now I am pretty certain both of her heart and her person, I almost begin to shudder at the approaching alliance, notwithstanding my absolute conviction of its propriety. Such unaccountable creatures are we, Melmoth; impatiently burning for what we find it difficult to enjoy, and sickening with apprehension the moment we get the blessing in our reach. There is no describing my present situation to you; I am the strangest compound of contradiction in the whole circuit of creation, and am one minute ready to reject what the next appears most essential both to my honour and my happiness.

Lady Haversham has just now done a very obliging thing with her usual tenderness and delicacy. She had promised to drink tea with me in the evening at Louisa's, and was to call on me in her chariot at seven for that purpose; but being prevented by the intrusion of some unexpected visitors, she sent one of her footmen to me with a little box, sealed up in a large sheet of paper, which contained a suit of diamonds to the value of five thousand pounds: they were accompanied by the following note, which I assure you gave me every whit as much satisfaction as the present itself.

‘MY dear brother has this day made me the happiest woman in the world. As a mark of my gratitude, I therefore beg he will accept of this little box, and present it at a convenient time to his intended lady. The least hesitation to receive it I shall consider as a proof of his neglect, and a want of that sincere and cordial affection which he will be always sure of finding in his affectionate sister,

‘HAVERSHAM.’

The jewels, Charles, are elegant to an excess; and I purpose carrying them to the amiable girl in the evening: I dare say we shall have a delicious *tête-à-tête*; for the old people, as their stay is to be so short in Bath, have a variety of engagements on their hands. What a pity it is, my dear friend, that our fancy will not always obey the dictates of our reason! Do you know, now, that I would give a thousand pounds to be heartily in love with Miss Mildmay: the match is really so desirable in itself, and my sister appears so strenuous for it's taking place, that I am actually concerned to find myself so little influenced by inclination. Yet I do not know, upon the whole, but that those marriages are the best calculated for felicity, which have the least of passion in their commencement. I have seen a multitude of people venturing their necks to come together, who, a month after their union, would venture their necks for a divorce with an equal degree of alacrity. One thing I am assured of, Charles; which is, that, if I do not make a fond husband, I shall at least make

make a good-natured one. I flatter myself, that hitherto I have shewn no great want either of humanity or manners; and, let me tell you, that a man of this cast is much more likely to make a woman happy, than he who sets out upon a romantick stock of rapture, and is much too exalted a lover to be satisfied merely with content. The generality of men, by expecting too much in their marriages, ridiculously sacrifice those blessings which the state is really capable of affording: instead of a rational tranquillity, they are buoyed up with a continual notion of tumultuary transports; and imagine, if they do not find their wives something more than goddesses, they must be something less than women. In like manner, the women look for as much courtship after the union as before it: accustomed to an intoxicating round of fulsome adulation, they really believe themselves the wonders we represent them; and think it surprizing, that we should relax in the least from that profound adoration with which they have all along been so respectfully distinguished. Thus both parties being led to expect too much, as I have already said, each is unhappily disappointed, and good-naturedly ascribes to the other those very uneasinesses which actually proceed from the folly of it's own imagination. Hence a thousand jealousies and altercations take their birth; and hence poor matrimony undergoes a thousand censures, from it's want of power to make a couple of fools happier than is consistent with the lot of humanity, or the narrowness of their own understandings. But adieu, dear Charles; it is high time to dress, and I am determined to be as much as possible with Louisa, in hopes that the numberless attractions which she possesses may make me fairly enamoured against the celebration of our nuptials. I am, honest Melmoth, your own

ROBERT HAROLD.

LETTER V.

MISS HARRIOT BEAUCLEER TO
MISS LOUISA MILD MAY.

IF possible, my charming friend, I shall be down with you in Oxfordshire by the day which I hope will make

you the happiest of women; and I wish with all my soul I could get my mamma's permission to go down sooner, as I do not at all approve of trusting you so much in company with a man of whom you are so passionately fond till the ceremony takes place. You tell me that you and he sit up for hours together, and enjoy the most exquisite *tête-à-têtes* after the family are in bed. Take care, my dearest Louisa, take care; these *tête-à-têtes* are very dangerous things to a woman in your circumstances; and an insidious lover might, in some unguarded moment, reap such an advantage from them, as would make my sweet friend an absolute dependent on his mercy, both for happiness and reputation.

Do not imagine, my dear girl, that I am here insinuating any improper doubts of your discretion: I know you have as much prudence as any young woman in England; but, believe me, Louisa, I should tremble for any young woman in England whom I saw in your circumstances. Your lover is a man endued with every art of persuasion, and every advantage of person: he is in a few days to be your husband; and, from the nature of his connection, as well as from the excess of your tenderness, must possess the most unlimited share of your confidence. If, therefore, in some unhappy moment, he should be uncommonly importunate for an anticipation of his happiness, my beautiful friend might find it difficult to withstand his solicitations: the tenderness of her heart might possibly prevail over the force of her understanding; and, to establish a momentary repose in his bosom, she might, perhaps, with a madness of generosity, destroy the everlasting tranquillity of her own.

Of all the stages in a woman's life, (my mother says, and I think with great reason) none is so dangerous as the period between her acknowledgment of a passion for a man, and the day set apart for her nuptials. Her mind, during that interval, is susceptible of impressions unusually tender; and the happy lover is admitted to a number of familiarities, which are in themselves the strongest temptations. Without any premeditated design, he is frequently inflamed by the unreserved softness which his mistress assumes, in the unsuspecting confidence of her heart; and unable,

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perhaps,

perhaps, to resist the impetuosity of his wishes, he endeavours to make the most of his opportunity. Secure of pardon, even if he gives the most palpable offence, he proceeds with boldness to the accomplishment of his purpose; and too many have been the unhappy young women who found themselves undone, before they entertained even a distant fear of destruction.

My mother has told me, that it is no uncommon circumstance among the men, my dearest Louisa, to try how far there is a possibility of carrying their power over a believing woman; and, greatly as they seem to be obliged by the sacrifice which we make them, I do not imagine there was ever a case in which one of them liked us the better for so convincing a proof of our affection; whereas, on the contrary, we have numberless instances where that very proof has excited their disgust, and induced them to cast us off

‘ Like a detested sin,’

as poor Monimia says, to the irreparable injury both of our peace and our characters. Even where our permitting a lover to anticipate the rights of a husband no way interrupts the treaty of marriage, still it lessens us so much in his opinion, that he ever after suspects our fidelity; and imagines, that what proceeded entirely from a passionate regard for himself, was the actual result either of levity or constitution. This single supposition is of itself sufficient to imbitter all the sweets of the hymeneal union; to blast all the roses round the pillows of love, and to plant perpetual thorns in their stead.

Excuse me, my dearest Louisa, for my anxiety on this occasion. By my uneasiness judge of my friendship, and be assured you are no less tender than happiness or honour to the bosom of your

HARRIOT BEAUCLERK.

LETTER VI.

SIR ROBERT HAROLD TO CHARLES MELMOTH, ESQ.

‘ FINAL destruction seize on all ‘ the world!’ Perhaps, Melmoth, there is not a fellow this mo-

ment existing so completely miserable as I. I have succeeded, fatally succeeded, with this amiable wretch, and both of us must bid adieu to happiness for ever!

In my last letter I told you, how this beautiful woman had entirely conquered all my indifference by the ineffable sweetness of her manner; and that I now longed for the day of our marriage with as much impatience as if I had from the first been passionately smitten. The little separation from her after her departure from Bath, gave an inconceivable spur to my inclination; and the bewitching air of softness with which she received me on my going down to her father’s, so completely did the business, that I wondered at my own stupidity in being so long insensible of her perfections.

The good old people, notwithstanding they seemed highly delighted with my company, nevertheless, through an injudicious degree of tenderness both to me and their daughter, took every opportunity of leaving us together; naturally enough supposing that we should be best pleased to be left to the uninterrupted enjoyment of each other’s conversation: after supper, particularly, they withdrew to their own apartment so early, that Louisa and I had at least three or four hours to the good, before we could reasonably think of retiring. I need not tell you, Melmoth, that when two young people are left together for any length of time, some familiarities will pass, though even both are actuated by the best inclinations. Would it not, for instance, have been surprizing, if, circumstanced as I was with Louisa, I had sat with her for two or three hours, without ever ravishing a kiss, presuming to sink upon her neck, or attempting to clasp her in my arms, when she even condescendingly acknowledged how tenderly she loved me? Would it not also have been equally surprizing, had she repulsed those little effusions of transport, at the very instant that they were excited by her own confession, and in a manner authorized by the consideration of the union which was so shortly to take place? A contrary behaviour would have been as unnatural as it was impossible; and virtue neither expected nor required more, than the restriction of our transports within some sensible bounds.

But,

But, alas, Melmoth! who can strike a line to the passions, or pretend to tell the impetuous tide of youth, 'Go no farther than this?' For my own part, as I shall answer it before God, I never in my life was more divested of sinister designs. I considered Louisa in quite a different light from any of those women with whom I had formerly trifled; and set her down as a lady, whose reputation was immediately connected with my own. I saw her, besides, the only daughter of an honourable family, which it would be unpardonable to disgrace; and the friendship my sister entertained for her, was a circumstance of itself sufficient to have prevented me even from once thinking about the possibility of attaining her upon any terms that were not strictly honourable.

You have often, my dear Melmoth, called me the most sentimental libertine you ever knew; and once, in a conversation with my sister Haverham, assured her, notwithstanding all my follies, that I was above laying any unmanly schemes for the seduction of innocence; in this you did me nothing more than justice. You yourself know that, in one half of my amours, the advances were so palpable on the wrong side, that there was no creditable method of getting off, even had I been the most sanctified puritan in the kingdom. You will, therefore, naturally credit my account, and believe that I am infinitely above any disingenuous attempts either to palliate or disguise my part in this unfortunate transaction.

I had been now a full week down at Louisa's, and company from various places was impatiently expected to attend at the approaching solemnity; when, last night, she and I sitting as usual to enjoy all the delicious nonsense which generally makes up the principal part of love conversations, we happened accidentally to mention a suit of night-cloaths which she had just received from London, and which, she said, became her excessively. As I expressed a desire to see them on her, she retired immediately to her room, and, in about a quarter of an hour, came down so irresistibly ravishing, that I was no longer my own master. Imagine to yourself, Melmoth, with all your boasted apathy of disposition, a woman, such as I have repeatedly described Miss Mildmay, dressed in a

flowing robe of white satin, with her fine black hair hanging carelessly down her neck, and every thing in the most voluptuous disorder: imagine this, I say, and tell me honestly whether you could have beheld her without emotion? If you could, you must either be something more or less than human. For my part, I was mere flesh and blood; I snatched her to my bosom with a phrenzy of the most passionate admiration, and almost stifled her with kisses. The extatick tenderness with which she received my embrace entirely destroyed my recollection; and a cursed sofa lying most conveniently ready to assist the purposes of my rashness, I proceeded from liberty to liberty till she was actually undone!

The guilty triumph thus compleated, we were both in an instant perfectly sensible of our indiscretion. Louisa stalked to her chair with a mingled air of the most fixed astonishment and distress, and preserved a profound silence for some minutes; till, at last, unable to endure the conflict in her bosom any longer, she hid her face in a handkerchief, and gave loose to a violent flood of tears. For my own part, Melmoth, I was equally tortured by shame and regret; for the first time in my life, I felt such a mortification at succeeding with a fine woman, that I could not for the soul of me say a syllable of comfort to her. The miseries which I easily foresaw must arise from this unfortunate lapse, crowded at once upon my imagination; so that that conquest which, at another time, perhaps, would have been the highest gratification to my vanity, now served only to wound my sensibility, and to fill me with the most poignant distress.

The wretched Louisa still continuing fixed with her elbows on her knees, her head supported by her two hands, and her face covered with her handkerchief, I walked over to her chair in a state of united anguish and irresolution; bleeding for what I saw her suffer, yet fearing to offer her the smallest consolation. However, instinctively dropping upon one knee, I begged she would be composed, and assured her that what had happened rather enhanced than lessened my affection; and that, as I was her husband in every thing but the ceremony, there was no offence whatsoever committed against virtue. Form, I ob-

served, was alone what we had violated; and, as the secret was entirely confined to ourselves, there was little occasion either for confusion or regret.

We are all of us, my dear Melmoth, ready enough to believe what we wish may be true; and poor Louisa, though she could not be convinced by the force of my reasonings, nevertheless attempted to be cheerful; she wiped her charming eyes, therefore, and seemed delighted at the respectful attitude in which she beheld me; for I still continued on my knee, and endeavoured, by all the little tenderesses in my power to raise her into credit with herself. I talked familiarly about the wedding-day, called her my *wife* in the most melting accent I could possibly assume; and, at intervals, took the liberty of chiding her anxiety as an equal doubt of my honour and my love. At last, I succeeded pretty well in re-assuring her: she ventured to look up with an air of some confidence, condescended to play with my fingers, and even once went so far as to honour my hand with her lips. I need scarcely inform you what the consequence was: the tide of passion was in an instant swelled up to the customary height, and every impulse of recollection was again swept away upon the couch.

Such, Melmoth, is the present situation of affairs between Louisa and your unfortunate friend; what to do I know not. You are not to be told how romantically delicate I am in my notions about women. It is with me a fixed principle, that the same woman who suffers even the man she doats upon to distraction, to take advantage of an unguarded moment, will have her unguarded moments with other people. Passion will, in all probability, often supply the want of inclination; and the same warmth of constitution which originally betrayed her into an indiscretion with him, is but too likely to make her guilty of indiscretions with every body else. How frequently, Charles, in the keenness of appetite, have I, where more agreeable dishes were not immediately at hand, fallen greedily upon such fare as actually turned my stomach when I came to consider it? Women, like ourselves, are only flesh and blood; desires are as natural to them as to us; and who can take upon him to say, when the favourite object of their

wishes is at any distance, but what necessity may immediately metamorphose a piece of coarse beef into an absolute ortolan?

This, you will possibly observe, is bringing a general charge against the sex, and supposing that there is no such thing as virtue existing in any individual of the whole: an opinion of such a nature is what I am neither base enough nor weak enough to adopt. Coxcomb as I may be in some respects, and greatly as my vanity has been flattered by success among the ladies, still I was never one of those fellows who thought the sex universally depraved. On the contrary, I dare say there are thousands who are capable of resisting the deepest subtleties of the most plausible design. But where we have ourselves experienced the frailty of a woman, it is natural enough to form an idea upon what we know; and reasonable enough to judge, from her behaviour in one or two circumstances, what her conduct is likely to be in all.

After a declaration of this kind, you may probably imagine that I do not intend marrying Miss Mildmay, notwithstanding the treaty has been carried so far between the two families; you are, however, much mistaken. Greatly as this unhappy affair has sunk her in my opinion, I shall nevertheless pay a rigid attention to the sanctity of my word. But though I shall behave with justice, I shall also act with candour. I shall inform her how utterly impossible it will be for her ever to recover my confidence after what has passed; and if she is weak enough to accept my hand while I make a positive avowal of my contempt—why, she must abide by the consequence.

This morning she came down to breakfast with an increased degree of beauty, if it is possible for such beauty to admit of an increase. The delightful consciousness that flushed upon her cheek, enlightened her complexion into an absolute blaze of perfection; while the speaking sensibility of a down-cast eye threw such a modesty over her features, as rendered her the finest picture which fancy could conceive of the softest innocence and love. Her father, charmed with her appearance, turned round to me, and, in a very low whisper, said, 'Ah, Harold! you see the sweetness and delicacy of my poor girl; the
day

' day is now so near she cannot look at you with any degree of resolution.' Unhappy old man! little does he imagine what a loose all that wonderful compound of sweetness and delicacy can give to the dictates of an unhal- lowed imagination. Little does he think how she burned in my arms last night, and poured out her whole soul in the most passionate storm of a voluptuous inclination. But, alas, Melmoth! why do I harrow up my recollection with that cursed night? It has given me an eternal aversion to the only woman I can ever look upon with tenderness, and fastened all the scorpions of an invincible hatred to the bosom of an ex- travagant love. You can scarcely im- agine, my dear Melmoth, what I felt at her approach. My indignation was no less excited than my transport, and I could not help saying to myself, ' How astonishingly is that creature calcu- lated to deceive! This moment, when I know her stained and polluted, what an angel-like air she assumes; as if utterly unconscious of a blot, and no less unsullied in her mind than fault- less in her person!' In reality, Mel- moth, the more innocent she seems now, the more I have hereafter to apprehend; since the same air of purity which at present varnishes over the crime I am sensible of, may, in future, serve to conceal a thousand, which are necessary for my knowledge, though destructive to my felicity. A few hours, how- ever, will determine my fate with re- gard to Miss Mildmay. This is Mon- day; and Saturday next the wedding is to be celebrated: none of the company are yet arrived, so that the sooner mat- ters are brought to an éclaircissement the better. Dear Melmoth, pity my situation, and believe me, with the ut- most affection, yours,

R. HAROLD.

LETTER VII.

MRS. MILDMAV TO THE RIGHT
HONOURABLE THE COUNTESS
OF HAVERSHAM.

O Lady Haversham, what shall I do, or where shall I go! Your inhu- man brother has broke my heart; and my unfortunate child, that was once the darling of my age, is now cast out

from the arms of her father, and ex- posed as well to the detestation as the contempt of all her family! If I can any way support my spirits to go through with the shocking story, you shall be acquainted with all; you have fine sense, Lady Haversham, you have great humanity, and can allow for the dis- traction of an unhappy mother, torn in a moment from the enjoyment of all her hopes, and doomed to languish out the little remainder of her days in equal wretchedness and disgrace.

Here my poor Mr. Mildmay and I were felicitating each other at the pro- spect of an approaching union between our family and yours, and waiting with impatience for the day which was to secure our child in the protection of a worthy husband. Nothing but your presence, the presence of our son, and the company of a few particular friends, was wanting to compleat our happi- ness. O that we could have prevailed upon you to accompany your cruel bro- ther down! the irreparable injury which has murdered all our tranquillity had then never happened; and we should now be exulting in felicity, instead of sinking beneath a load of unutterable shame and distress!

I was sitting in my own parlour this morning, reading my favourite Sherlock upon Death, when Sally, my daughter's maid, screamed out from the top of the stairs, that her mistress was dying. Terrified at this information, as you may naturally imagine, I hastened to her assistance, and found the unfortunate girl in a very strong hysserick, stretched upon the floor, and Sally in vain at- tempting to raise her up. By this time, two or three of the other women-ser- vants joined us, and we lifted her be- tween us into an arm-chair; where, with a great deal of difficulty, she was brought a little to herself. She scarcely recover- ed, however, when she fell into another fit, and continued in a course of suc- cessive faintings for several hours; so that I thought it prudent to send a chariot, and six of our best horses, for Doctor Webley. About five o'clock in the evening she became pretty well composed, and the excessive fatigue she had undergone threw her into a profound sleep; in which she lay till very near twelve. During the prin- cipal part of this melancholy scene, my poor Mr. Mildmay and I were not five minutes

minutes absent from the room. Her father, you know, doated on her, if possible, with a degree of tenderness more piercingly sensible than myself: he hung over her continually, in an agony of speechless distraction; tore the white hair from his temples, or turned up his eyes towards Heaven, as if he meant to expostulate with the Divine Being for visiting his daughter with such an affliction, at a time when he looked for nothing but the most perfect content. His distress, you may easily conclude, was a considerable aggravation of what I felt for my wretched child; and, though I endeavoured to console him, every effort which I made for that purpose rendered me doubly in need of consolation myself. All this time I was totally ignorant of what occasioned the unhappy girl's distress; and I tortured my imagination incessantly, with endeavouring to think upon some probable cause. But judge, Lady Haversham, of my distraction, when the poor deluded creature, struck with the anguish into which she saw us plunged, seized the first opportunity that her perfect recovery to reason supplied, of informing me that she was totally unworthy of the least regard; that she had fatally sacrificed the honour of her family; that Sir Robert Harold was irrecoverably lost; and that death was the only thing which could possibly put a period to her afflictions. In short, the keenness of her sensibility would not allow her to keep any thing concealed: she let me into the whole story of her guilty intercourse with your brother; and the agonies into which the horrid discovery naturally threw me, sweeping away every trace of her recollection, she made no scruple, in the fullness of her soul, to mention the cause of my agitation to her father; upbraiding herself at the same time as the worst of parricides, who had not only shortened my days but murdered my reputation.

You know, my dear Lady Haversham, how rigidly refined my poor Mr. Mildmay is in every thing which concerns the female delicacy of his family. You know he can scarcely allow for the most casual infirmities of human nature in a woman, though he preposterously thinks the other sex is entitled to the most unlimited indulgence. All his pity, therefore, for his miserable daughter, was instantly turned into an extravagant rage; he spurned the

wretched girl as she lay at his feet, lamenting her fatal indiscretion in language that would pierce a heart of adamant, and imploring his forgiveness with all the forcible rhetoric of streaming eyes, a bursting bosom, and a prostrate supplication. In vain did I kneel with my child, (for, O Lady Haversham, notwithstanding the greatness of her crime, I cannot drive the mother from my heart!) and conjure him, by whatever I thought most affecting, to pity her: the more earnest we were in our solicitation, the more inexorable he became in his resentment; till at last, worked up to a phrenzy of indignation, he poured out a most barbarous execration on her, and commanded me, in a tone which I never presumed to dispute, to see the infamous strumpet (that was his cruel word) turned out of the house in less than an hour, as I either valued his repose, or my own tranquillity. My own tranquillity, Lady Haversham—alas, I shall never know a moment's happiness more! My peace of mind is eternally destroyed; and, so long as I retain the sense of feeling, I must be tremblingly alive to the united wounds both of misfortune and disgrace.

Mr. Mildmay, after pronouncing this sentence on his lost, unhappy daughter, flew out of the room, though it was past twelve o'clock at night; though the season was remarkably severe, and though a most violent storm of wind and rain was at that very moment abroad, nothing could induce him to delay the execution of his commands till morning. Utterly deaf to my remonstrances, he insisted upon exposing her to all the fury of the elements; and it was with the utmost difficulty that I prevailed upon him, at last, to let the chariot take her to farmer Wilson's at the end of the avenue; in fact, as well as all parental feeling, he seemed to put off all common humanity, and to rejoice at the horror of the night in which she was to be driven out, though, but an hour before, he would have shuddered,

—'Lest the winds of heaven
'Should visit her face too roughly.'

O Lady Haversham, how happy are you in a want of children! You have a thousand times lamented in my hearing that you never had a child: yet, was it possible for you to imagine but the smallest



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Of sad, & selfish, how happy are you
in a war of children! You have
shorter times lamented in my hearing
that you never had a child - you will
certainly let you to imagine, but not
forget

smallest part of my distress, you would own the kindness of Providence was never more manifested than in the refusal of what you think a blessing, and what I experience to be the greatest of all misfortunes.—But, to go on.

The severity which Mr. Mildmay thus relentlessly exercised on his miserable child, in a great measure subdued the resentment which I myself should otherwise have entertained against her; I could not therefore resist the most ample indulgence of maternal tenderness, when the moment of separation came on: I pressed her to my heart with as much cordiality as if she had never offended, and entirely forgot the nature of her fault, in the apprehension of never seeing her again. The poor girl was quite unable to support herself against what she called an excess of goodness: she fell repeatedly on her knees to kiss my hands; drenched them with her tears; and departed, leaning on the arm of her Sally, with a desire that I would forget there ever had been such a creature as herself, and a request that I would transfer all the affection which she had so shamefully disgraced to the advancement of her brother's happiness, and the restoration of her father's tranquillity.

During the short time allowed us to take leave, we agreed that she should go to her cousin Darnel's in London, as Mrs. Darnel is a very grave woman, and has some obligations to our family, which must render her additionally solicitous about Louisa's accommodation: there, if her unhappy lapse should be attended with any consequences, she will be sure of tenderness and secrecy. I have packed up all her cloaths and her little ornaments; and, in one of her trunks, shall send up, unknown to her father, a Bank note of five hundred pounds: this will maintain her till I find whether there is a possibility of prevailing on Mr. Mildmay to overlook her fault. If, as I much apprehend, a reconciliation with him should be extremely difficult, I must make her what remittances I can, as he will never think those entitled to any instances of his bounty whom he makes the objects of his resentment.

Such, my dear Lady Haversham, is the present situation of your unfortunate friend. Your cruel, your inhuman brother, may perhaps triumph in the desolation which he has occasioned; and,

like the generality of low-minded libertines, imagine that, in proportion as he has aggravated the distresses of a family that sincerely loved and esteemed him, he has made a fresh acquisition to the importance of his character. You, I know, will heartily sympathize in our afflictions. You are his sister, but not the abettor of his crimes; and therefore, I am persuaded, every thing in your power will be done to procure us the most effectual redress.

The only redress which we can now have, is an instant renewal of the late treaty which your brother so cruelly disturbed. About two hours before I first heard of Louisa's illness, it seems he rode away from hence upon a pretended visit to the Earl of A—; but, as he has never been heard of since, I suppose he is in London by this time, entertaining his dissolute companions with the destruction of poor Louisa Mildmay! O, Lady Haversham! do not you wonder that, in such a distraction of mind, I am able to write with the least method or propriety? The power of recollection, however, is a faculty which is no way enviable in the wretched; and those who have unhappily lost their peace of mind, ought, in my opinion, to wish for an immediate loss of understanding.

Notwithstanding my indignation at your brother's barbarity, Lady Haversham, I am nevertheless ready to overlook every thing which has happened, if he comes down again and re-establishes, as far as he yet can, the repose of our family. Louisa, I am sure, must doat with the most extravagant fondness on him, or she never could have made such a sacrifice: her forgiveness, therefore, especially if I interest myself in the affair, is not very difficult to be obtained; and perhaps Mr. Mildmay, when he sees that there is no other course to follow, may be brought to abate a little of his resentment. My reason for being thus anxious for an accommodation of this unhappy affair, is a fear, lest, when my son comes to hear of it, he may take some desperate revenge, which will involve us in new calamities. You know he is brave to a fault, and piques himself excessively on the dignity of his profession, and the reputation of his family. Should he, therefore, think of calling your brother to an account, I may possibly be robbed of both my children, and may have the murder of my

my daughter's honour inconceivably aggravated by the timeless death of my son.

The same consideration, Lady Haversham, which renders me anxious for the preservation of a son, must naturally influence your conduct for the safety of a brother, even admitting that a person of your ladyship's well known benevolence should, upon so affecting an occasion, be cold to the dictates of justice or the feelings of humanity. You will consequently exert your utmost power with your brother to renew the treaty lately carried on, and try all your interest with Mr. Mildmay in favour of Louisa. Who knows, my dear Lady Haversham, but Providence may yet have some hours of peace in store for an unhappy mother, and enable her to look once more with cheerfulness upon her family! This letter I have dispatched by a special messenger, as I wanted to send you the jewels which your brother a few days ago presented to Louisa; and which, at parting, the poor girl left with me for that purpose. Your ladyship's good sense will immediately see the propriety of returning them; and, I dare say, do me the justice to think that I consider the necessity which has occasioned that return, as the greatest misfortune that ever yet befel your ladyship's sincerely devoted, but unspeakably afflicted,

HORATIA MILD MAY.

LETTER VIII.

SIR ROBERT HAROLD TO CHARLES
MELMOTH, ESQ.

YOU are no doubt impatient, my dear Charles, from the nature of my last letter, to hear in what manner I conducted my explanatory interview with Miss Mildmay. You cannot, however, be more impatient to hear than I am to tell it; yet, somehow, I feel a latent kind of repugnance to enter upon the subject, as if I was sensible of having acted with a manifest impropriety. This latent uneasiness you have often called the working of honest conscience, and told me that I might be sure I had done some unjustifiable action whenever I found it busy with my tranquillity. I am half afraid, Melmoth, that you are right: this Miss Mildmay hangs unac-

countably upon my heart; and, was I master of the universe, I would give it, either never to have seen her, or to throw an everlasting oblivion upon one cursed transaction.

After breakfast on Monday morning, Mr. Mildmay withdrew to his study, and Mrs. Mildmay retired to her reading parlour: Louisa and I were left alone; and neither of us, for a full half hour, spoke a single syllable, each expecting the other would begin the conversation. My silence, as it was indeed my business to speak first, cutting the poor girl to the heart, she burst into a flood of tears, and with some difficulty told me, that she plainly saw how much she was lessened in my esteem; and that she was sure, after what had happened, it would be much better to think of breaking off the intended connection than to carry it on where there was so small an expectation of happiness. To this I replied, with an air of tenderness, visibly affected however, that she did the highest injustice to my love; that I beheld her with a more passionate admiration than ever, and that nothing could be more idle than to tease herself with the indulgence of a fear that had so little foundation in probability: I concluded this cold compliment, with a bow upon her hand, that indicated very little or no emotion, though it contained a great deal of respect; and, turning to the window with an air of the most mortifying unconcern, observed that we could scarcely hope for any of our expected company while the weather continued so uncommonly boisterous.

Louisa was a woman of too much soul, to stand against the attack of a palpable indifference, however speciously glossed over with a smooth civility; and, indeed, I intended my indifference should be seen pretty plainly, as I had no other method of bringing matters to an éclaircissement with any tolerable degree of propriety. In proportion, therefore, as she saw me calm and undisturbed, she very naturally took the alarm, and considered all the useless professions of my good-breeding as so many indirect declarations of my disrespect. To a fellow of your knowledge, Melmoth, I need not observe how extremely we are provoked by a polite serenity, where our hearts are deeply interested in the issue of a debate. Good-breeding, where we want to excite the strongest emotions, is

is the most aggravating insult which we can possibly meet; because it equally disappoints our views, and denies us an opportunity of finding fault: conscious that it would effectually answer my purpose, I continued it till I had wound up Louisa to the highest pitch of passion, and *madamed* her with so profound a degree of veneration, as gave me a speedy occasion of carrying my design into execution.

'Very well, Sir Robert,' says she, as I stood playing with a Chinese figure on the chimney-piece, *so* placid and *so* undisturbed, 'you see this affair in a very easy light; but suffer me to assure you, before things are carried to the last extremity, that if you are actuated by any insolent motives of pity for me, and not influenced entirely by a regard for your own happiness, far as matters have unfortunately gone between us, I am determined to stop where we are. You may, perhaps, render me wretched, but it never shall be in your power to make me contemptible.'

The mingled air of dignity and distress with which the beautiful girl pronounced this declaration, went to my very heart; yet that damred, unhappy facility with which she yielded to my wishes, still employed the principal share of my thoughts. I was determined to act agreeable to the resolution which I had previously made, and therefore replied, that though nothing but the honour of her hand could possibly secure my felicity, nevertheless, since she seemed so desirous to break off the treaty subsisting between us, I was ready to make any concession that might be agreeable to her inclinations, however repugnant such a concession might be to my own.

The cool sarcastick humility of this reply, added greatly to her indignation, but no way got the better of her recollection. 'Sir Robert,' says she, 'it is no difficult matter to perceive the whole extent of your design. The fatal testimony which I have given you of my fondness has lessened me in your esteem, and of course rendered you disinclined to the union which was to subsist between our families: you want, by a cruel serenity, a stabbing politeness of behaviour, to force me into such a refusal of your addresses, as may give a colour to your contempt.'

'There is no necessity, however, Sir Robert, for running to so poor, so unmanly an artifice. If you are in the least desirous of avoiding a match with a wretch, whose partiality for yourself has alone rendered her culpable, be generous and tell her so. She is not yet so utterly lost to sentiment, as to solicit for your compassion, since it seems she is to be no longer entitled to your love!'

'Dear Madam,' replied I, 'moderate a little of this unnecessary warmth. What cause, what ground have I given you for these unaccountable suppositions?'

'Sir Robert,' interrupted she, 'it is not altogether so easy to blind the eagle-eyed inspection of a vehement lover.—What cause, what ground have you given me for these unaccountable suppositions?—The most ample cause, the most indubitable ground. When I came down this morning, did not your eye industriously avoid mine: and all the time of breakfast did not you officiously force your conversation on my father, to avoid saying a syllable to me? When we were left alone, instead of entertaining me as you used to do, did not you sit a whole hour without ever opening your lips? and when in the fulness of my heart I took notice of this indifference, did not you then come out with your *dear Madams, your profound veneration, and your everlasting esteems*? Nay, at this moment, when you see my poor bosom bursting with the most poignant distress at your behaviour, have you not the same unimpassioned countenance, the same air of unconcern, and the same cutting distance of civility, which first of all gave birth to my suspicions; as if you triumphed in your power, and were desirous of seeing how far the abuse of it was able to plunge me in distress?'

'Upon my word, Miss Mildmay,' replied I, 'you put a very strange interpretation upon looks; and I am infinitely sorry that any unfortunate disposition of my features should give you the smallest uneasiness. I did not, however, imagine that the use of a becoming respect could be construed into an offence—'

'Respect! respect!' exclaimed she, with a wildness of look and elevation of tone that really startled me: 'respect!'

D

'God

' God give me patience! Inhuman
 ' Harold! And do you think that a
 ' woman, doating like me to distraction,
 ' can ever put up with a cold unani-
 ' mated respect, where she has a right
 ' to demand the warmest returns of a
 ' passionate love! Respect, after what
 ' has passed between you and me, is the
 ' grossest of all insults! and if you have
 ' nothing else to offer me, I scorn both
 ' you and your respect; and here, in the
 ' presence of the living God, I solemnly
 ' ly swear never to be yours, but will
 ' rather undergo any load of infamy and
 ' misfortune, than give my hand to a
 ' man, who, after having blasted my
 ' peace of mind for ever, under the spe-
 ' cious appearance of the most vehement
 ' passion, shall in a few hours let me see
 ' I am so much lessened in his estima-
 ' tion as to talk of treating me with po-
 ' liteness and respect! Go, Sir Robert
 ' Harold,' continued she, in a gentler
 ' accent, but with a faltering tone; ' go,
 ' leave me—instantly! I here give you
 ' back all your vows and protestations;
 ' and shall only say, that you have
 ' eternally destroyed the happiness of a
 ' poor girl, who would die for the pre-
 ' servation of yours.' Here the storm
 ' found way; for, unable any longer to
 ' suppress her emotion, she threw herself
 ' into a great-chair, and gave way to a
 ' violent flood of tears.

All this time, Melmoth, if you do
 me justice, you must be sensible that my
 distresses fell little short of Miss Mild-
 may's. You know I have not naturally
 an obdurate heart, however reason and
 reflection may, on particular occasions,
 oblige me to resist it's emotions. Judge,
 therefore, what I must have felt, to see
 the woman of my soul tortured, in a
 manner to madness, with the coldness
 of my behaviour; yet to see also an ab-
 solute occasion for continuing that cold-
 ness; nay, an absolute occasion of giv-
 ing her up for ever. A thousand times
 was I ready to throw myself at her feet,
 and solicit a reconciliation. My love,
 joined to my humanity, pleaded the
 propriety of such a proceeding in terms
 the most forcible; but my reason and
 my pride stepped constantly in to my as-
 sistance, and convinced me that the an-
 guish of a separation at that time was
 infinitely preferable to a whole life of
 despicable jealousy and aching discon-
 tent. As well for the poor girl's sake
 as my own, I saw the indispensable ne-

cessity of persevering in my plan; and,
 as the dignity of her sentiments had
 made a parting considerably more easy
 than I could expect, I exerted all my
 fortitude to oppose the remonstrances of
 my love, being fully convinced, that to
 lose the present opportunity would only
 render a breach more difficult another
 time, if any other time could even sup-
 ply me with so fair an occasion to break
 off.

Miss Mildmay had no sooner thrown
 herself into the chair, than good man-
 ners necessarily obliged me to console
 her as well as I was able; I mean, con-
 sistent with my design: I went, there-
 fore, to the side of the chair, and taking
 hold of her hand, I raised it coldly to
 my lips, and again begged she would
 moderate a passion which was wholly
 founded on mistake. ' This excess of
 ' sensibility, my dear Miss Mildmay,'
 observed I, ' is an equal injustice to my
 ' sentiments and your own understand-
 ' ing. The exception which you have
 ' so unfortunately taken to my beha-
 ' viour this morning, is rather the re-
 ' sult of an extraordinary delicacy on
 ' your part, than the consequence of
 ' any impropriety on mine. You say
 ' I am desirous of discontinuing my
 ' addresses, and that you are conscious
 ' of being lessened in my esteem. How
 ' cruel, how inequitable a supposition!
 ' when I am here impatiently waiting
 ' for the happy day which is to unite us
 ' for ever, and ready this instant, if you
 ' really doubt my sincerity, to anticipate
 ' the wishes of the two families by a
 ' marriage that shall silence your fears,
 ' till I am publicly honoured with your
 ' hand in the presence of all our rela-
 ' tions. Tell me, is there any greater
 ' proof which I can possibly give you,
 ' either of my love or my esteem? If
 ' there is, be kind enough to name it;
 ' for, be assured, I only want to know
 ' your inclinations, that I may fly to
 ' indulge them.'

Though there was nothing extremely
 passionate in this address, Melmoth,
 nevertheless, had I delivered it with any
 energy of tone, or significance of gesture,
 it might perhaps have removed Louisa's
 anxiety at once, and all might have
 been immediately accommodated be-
 tween us; but as I spoke it with in-
 conceivable phlegm, and kept my eye
 continually wandering round the room,
 it was impossible for her, without a ma-
 nifest

manifest deviation from her natural dignity, to accept it as an apology. Whether she really saw into my true motive or not, I shall not attempt to determine; but raising up her head, and regarding me for some time with a look of the most earnest attention, she assumed a steady articulate tone of voice, and delivered herself to the following purport.

'The more, Sir Robert, that I consider the nature of your behaviour, the more I am convinced how utterly improper it is for you and I ever to think of uniting. The recent unhappy transaction has destroyed me entirely in your good opinion; and, indeed, no wonder, for it has entirely destroyed me in my own. I see that, as a man of fashionable honour, you are ready to fulfil your engagements with me; but by the manner in which you testify this readiness, I also see that you secretly wish I should discharge you from that obligation. You want to provoke me into such an exertion of my pride, as must force me to reject you; and only desire to save appearances, by drawing that refusal from me which must otherwise absolutely proceed from yourself. It would, however, be much more generous if you candidly acknowledged the real motives of your behaviour; and since you have fortitude enough to bear up against the pain of a separation, I could wish you had spirit enough to avow the design. This method of making me answerable for the consequences of your own infidelity, is no less unmanly than it is unjust; but it is below me to upbraid you: for any claim which I shall make upon your inclinations, be satisfied, that if you are willing to be free, you are so.'

As she paused in this place, I was about to make a reply; but she stopped me in the beginning of my speech, and said, 'Sir Robert, professions are idle things when contradicted by the incontrovertible evidence of facts. You have made me miserable, and you have made me worthless; do not, therefore, by the display of an affected tenderness, seek to load me with an additional portion, either of wretchedness or disgrace. I am not altogether the simpleton you take me for: your motives I saw through from the moment you spoke upon this subject; and

'though you have shewn but little consideration for me during the course of our debate, I shall nevertheless spare you a world of confusion and anxiety. In short, Sir, without putting you to the trouble of any farther arts to break off the treaty between us, I again assure you, in the most solemn manner, that it never shall take place; and, unhappy as I shall freely own this resolution must for some time make me, I nevertheless think it not a little fortunate that I discovered your sentiments before the intended ceremony (by preventing the possibility of a separation) had fastened me to a more lasting, as well as to a more aggravated distress.'

Here, Melmoth, was the end of our altercation. Louisa, on finishing this speech, rose hastily from her chair, and darting up to her room, as I suppose, left me to chew the cud of my own reflections; which, to speak honestly, my dear Charles, were none of the most agreeable. However, though I was secretly pleased that she had, by a very generous effort of soul, spared me the mortification of being more than passive in the course of this transaction, you cannot think how it affected both my pride and my tenderness, to see her so apparently easy upon such a trying occasion. I imagined it would cost her something more to give me up for ever; and to the disgrace of my humanity I must own, that it would have no way displeased me, had she shewn a little stronger sensibility in our separation.

Being thus left alone, I rang for Edwards, and ordering him to get the chaise ready in an instant, I set out from Mr. Mildmay's, without taking leave of a single soul, leaving only one of the footmen to bring the portmanteau after me, and ordering Ned to distribute, agreeable to the hospitable customs of this country, twenty guineas among the servants.

The interval from quitting Mr. Mildmay's till my arrival at Reading was one of the most disagreeable passages in my whole life. Shame and remorse harrowed up my bosom alternately; and, when I reflected upon what Louisa was likely to suffer, I was tortured to distraction. The piteous figure I made, thus stealing away from a house, in which, but the day before, I was absolutely idolized, gave me the

severest mortification; and, in short, the universal distress which I knew must result from my behaviour, operated so strongly upon my humanity, that I was a thousand times ready to turn back, with a resolution of sacrificing my own peace of mind to preserve the quiet of my ever amiable sister, the beautiful Louisa, and her respectable family. But when I considered what had passed, when I considered what might probably happen, every thing fell before the arguments of my pride, and I continued invincibly attached to my first determination.

O Melmoth! did these women but know how we worship them for refusing to gratify our wishes; did they but know how we doat upon the indignation of a fine eye, when fired into a blaze of conscious virtue, and striking an instant confusion upon the presumptuous addresses of a designing lover; how few of them would listen to an improper solicitation! But, ridiculously confident of their own fortitude, or preposterously imagining that those concessions are most like to secure an admirer, which are most apt to excite his contempt, they constantly betray their own cause, and oblige him in a manner to despise and desert them.—But a truce with reflections.

When I came to my inn at Reading, the first thing I did was to write a short letter to Mr. Mildmay, thanking him for the many civilities which he had shewn me; and informing him that it was with inexpressible regret I quitted his house, at a time when I fondly flattered myself with the hope of speedily becoming so near a part of his family; but that, as I had reasons to believe a union with me would be no way conducive to the happiness of his amiable daughter, I had determined to make a sacrifice of my own felicity, rather than be the least impediment to her's; and concluded with the customary round of common-place compliments, that tingle very prettily on the ear, though they seldom interest either the heart or the understanding. This letter I dispatched by Edwards, for two reasons; because, in the first place, a special messenger carried an air of greater respect, than if I had sent it by the post; and because, in the second, I knew Edwards would give a sharp look-out, and bring me a pretty exact account of

every thing which had happened since my departure.

And now, Melmoth, what say you to the part which I have acted in this affair? Do not you think my dexterity in getting off, a masterpiece; and my fortitude in resisting the importunate remonstrances of my own heart, an exertion of philosophy, which is at least equal to any thing in all antiquity? To be serious, however, though I think you will in the main approve both of my prudence and my resolution, I am nevertheless fearful of hearing your sentiments. As to Lady Haversham, I know she will for some time be in the pouts, and fancy that I have behaved with the greatest impropriety; but as there is no likelihood of her ever becoming acquainted with the real cause of my proceeding, and as I am conscious her brother is the person on earth who holds the highest place in her affections, I am satisfied the storm must in a little time blow over, and that a few days will re-inflate me perfectly in her esteem.

Poor Louisa! was her peace of mind a little established, I could with the more cheerfulness submit to my part of the anxiety; but somehow her distress is continually present to my imagination, and my own feelings are perpetually aggravated by the recollection of her sufferings. Women, however, though their sensibility may be more piercingly exquisite than ours, are nevertheless much readier to conquer the remembrance of misfortune: they feel more deeply indeed at first; but from the osier-like pliability of their minds, the moment the first fury of the tempest is sustained, they gradually rise to their former situation; the anguish imperceptibly softens from affliction into melancholy, from melancholy into languor, and from languor into tranquillity; whereas the masculine mind, like the oak in the fable, is shattered in the severity of a conflict, when it might easily have recovered the most violent shock by a happy facility in bending. This remark, Charles, is not the consequence of an idle speculation: in the course of my own experience, I have frequently found it existing in reality. When I first commenced life, I have been the most uneasy fellow in the world at the conclusion of an amour, lest the distraction in which I saw the unfortunate fair one absorbed should force her
into

into some desperate extremity; yet how have I stared with astonishment, when, in the short circle of a few hours, the self-same miserable nymph, who was prostrate at my feet, and, tearing her hair with all the phrenzy of an extravagant passion, has appeared in the side-box or the drawing-room, with as perfect a composure upon her features as if her tender bosom had never undergone the smallest agitation? On this account, therefore, I flatter myself, that Miss Mildmay's uneasiness will very speedily wear off, especially as her secret will rest in a manner with herself, and as she herself also has the credit of the rejection.

I shall by this day's post write to Lady Haverham. That woman, Charles, has a soul that strikes against the stars, and excites, in the midst of all the brother's familiarity, a something that commands my highest admiration. Notwithstanding all your peculiarities, you are one of her greatest favourites; call upon her therefore immediately on the receipt of this, and let me as immediately know what she says of my breach with Miss Mildmay. I shall stay at this place till I receive your answer: where I shall go next must be a matter of farther consideration; though *where*, would be a matter of no consequence, as I am heartily weary of myself, were it not, that I am, in spite of all my indifference to the world, your ever faithful

R. HAROLD.

LETTER IX.

MR. CHARLES MELMOTH TO SIR ROBERT HAROLD.

I Do not know how it is, Harold, but notwithstanding my general disregard of women, you have interested me strangely in favour of Miss Mildmay; and this unaccountable delicacy of yours in breaking off with a lady, merely because she has given you the most convincing proof of her affection, is what, in my opinion, favours considerably more of romance than of real understanding. To embrace a certain misery, for fear of a misfortune which is never likely to happen, may perhaps make you the hero of a very

pretty novel; but must, in actual life, expose you to the unremitting ridicule of every body who is trusted with your secret: however, as the die is irrecoverably cast, and as I do not see that the generous girl could be prevailed upon to have you, were you even to sneak back to her father's house in as pitiful a manner as you left it, I shall throw away as few of my reflections as possible upon a fellow who acts in manifest repugnance to the sentiments both of his reason and his honour, and is willing to become a rascal in the eyes of the wise and the worthy, for fear the ignorant or the profligate should set him down as a fool.

Agreeably to the desire of your letter, I had no sooner looked over the contents than I set out to your sister's; but, instead of being immediately ushered up stairs, according to custom, the servant told me that his lady had been excessively ill the whole day, and given orders against the admittance of any visitors. 'However, Sir,' says the honest man, 'as it is you, I will call.' 'Mrs. Harper, her ladyship's woman, who will probably give you a more satisfactory answer.'

Harper accordingly came down to me; and, with a look of mingled grief and impatience, asked me if you were come to town. I replied in the negative, and enquired if I might not speak a word or two with her lady. 'Yes, to be sure, Sir,' answered she, 'though I do not believe she would see any other person in the kingdom.' On this she led me up stairs, and there I found your sister with a letter before her, which she afterwards informed me came from Mrs. Mildmay. It was easy to see that Lady Haverham had been weeping much; her eyes were prodigiously swelled, and there was an uncommon paleness over her whole face, which sufficiently indicated both indispotion and distress.

You know how little she stands upon ceremony with me; she pointed therefore to a chair near her own, and waving with her hand to Harper, as a signal to withdraw, she burst into a violent flood of tears. As I had but too much reason to guess the cause of her perturbation, and was sensible that talking in her present circumstances would only add to her affliction, I waited without

ever

ever opening my lips, till she had somewhat recovered herself, and was a little able to enter upon a conversation.

After her tears had procured her some relief, she turned to me with an air of unspeakable dejection, and cried, 'O, Mr. Melmoth! this barbarous brother will break my heart; he has planted daggers here,' putting her hand upon her bosom; 'but you know the whole affair, I suppose, as I am sensible that, of all his friends, you possess the highest place in his confidence.'

I bowed, and was silent.

'What think you, Sir,' says she, 'of this new exploit? Can you say any thing to defend him now? Would to God that you could! Yet, O Mr. Melmoth! an attempt to extenuate his guilt would no less disgrace your good sense, than injure your humanity! But tell me, Sir, has he sent you an account of particulars, has he made you acquainted with every thing?'

I again bowed, and was silent.

'And well, Mr. Melmoth,' says she, 'what can we do to save his life; to save the honour of the dear unhappy girl, and to restore the peace of a worthy, innocent family?'

I replied, that you were still at Reading, and would remain there for a day or two; that I was convinced nobody had so great an influence over you as her ladyship; and advised her to exert that influence in such a manner as she should judge most conducive to those salutary purposes.

'Aye, but Sir,' interrupted Lady Haverham, 'do you know that poor Miss Mildmay is turned out of doors; that she is now a wanderer, an outcast from her father's house; and that her disgrace must inevitably become publick before any letter or message can possibly reach him? Her unhappy mother sends me a bleeding account of particulars. I suppose, after your cruel friend had quitted the house, Miss Mildmay, between her consciousness on account of the past, and her despair on account of the future, revealed the whole matter to the venerable lady. Here, Mr. Melmoth, we keep no secrets from you; here is Mrs. Mildmay's letter; and if you can read it with dry eyes, you have either more philosophy or less

'feeling than I could wish any person whom I really regard to possess.'

I took the letter, and shall not scruple to acknowledge that I cried very heartily at several of the passages. The elevation of sentiment which the young lady shews, in never once attempting to upbraid you, though she had such an undoubted occasion for reproach, gives me a very favourable idea of her character; and the generosity of her self-accusation, is such an argument in support of her candour, as must, I think, entirely remove those unmanly apprehensions upon which you grounded your rejection.

Though I am by many years the oldest man, you know the sex infinitely better than I, and know also better than I what is essential to the promotion of your own happiness: yet, in the present case, my dear Harold, I think you excessively in fault. Through the whole of Miss Mildmay's behaviour, there has been much tenderness, but no levity; and her error was an excess of love, not a vehemence of constitution. Had it been the latter, like the generality of women, she would have kept her secret to herself, or meanly crouched under your indignities, in such a manner as had prevented the likelihood of a separation; but, still alive to the sharpest nicety of sentiment, she neither could stoop to put up with an insult to retain you, nor, when a separation took place, attempt to conceal, by any duplicity of conduct, the fatal occasion of her loss. In whatsoever light I view her conduct, I see a woman of exalted principle, though I find that woman unhappily in love, and in love with a fellow, too, who, instead of making any allowances on account of her passion, makes use of that very passion as an argument for involving her in equal distress and disgrace.

I have here, at Lady Haverham's request, inclosed Mrs. Mildmay's letter, as your sister is, in consequence of this unhappy affair, so very much indisposed, that she doubts her own ability to write to day. She has charged me, however, in her name, to tell you, that, with all her tenderness for you, if you give up Miss Mildmay, you must give up her also: she considers herself as a partner in the injury which that unfortunate young lady has sustained; and is, besides, apprehensive of those consequences

consequences which naturally result from the dishonour of a considerable family : you understand me ; Colonel Mildmay and you must inevitably have a meeting ; and though I know you as successful in your weapons, and am sensible you have as much courage as any man in England, it must nevertheless be a disagreeable circumstance to a man of your sensibility, to expose Mr. Mildmay's house to fresh misfortunes, when the injury which you have already done it exceeds the power of reparation.

Before matters, therefore, come to extremities, I could wish, for your own sake, for your sister's sake, for my sake, for every body's sake, you would instantly come up to London, and endeavour at a reconciliation with Miss Mildmay : a woman who loves you to distraction, can scarcely refuse you a pardon for any offence, especially as the grant of that pardon will be an essential means of promoting her own happiness, and preserving the honour of her family. You see, by her mother's letter, where she is to be ; and, if you have either a passion for her, an affection for your sister, a friendship for me, or a regard for yourself, you will immediately comply with so reasonable a request.

Were we to weigh the force of your present objection to Miss Mildmay in a proper scale, it would appear so astonishingly trifling, that you yourself must wonder how you ever gave it any consideration. You are only fearful of being miserable, you say, if you marry Miss Mildmay ; yet you prefer the real misery of giving her up, and involving the best of sisters, and a whole innocent family, in the utmost distress, rather than run the chance of an imaginary misfortune. Is this a proceeding consistent with that good sense, which, in spite of all your faults, I must allow you ; putting even every motive of generosity, friendship, and humanity, entirely out of the question ? Indeed, Sir Robert, the answer is greatly to your disadvantage ; and, was I less acquainted with the extent of your abilities, I should be apt to form such opinions as would do no great credit to your understanding.

I had almost forgot to inform you, that Mrs. Mildmay has sent up the jewels which you presented to her amiable daughter, when there was such a

likelihood of a happy union between the two families : your sister actually sobbed when she mentioned them ; and, in my hearing, ordered Harper to lock them up in some place where she might never have an opportunity of seeing them.

This letter, my dear Harold, is very long and very dull ; but the anxiety in which I labour on your account, and the long train of evils which I foresee, should you foolishly neglect the advice which I have here given you, totally incapacitates me from attending either to method or connection. But what have I to do with method or connection in letters of friendship ? Those who write only from the head, regard the beauty of composition ; while those who speak from the heart, are utterly unmindful of ornament. Believe me, therefore, to be your very faithful

C. MELMOTH.

LETTER X.

LADY HAVERSHAM TO SIR ROBERT HAROLD.

I Do not know in what form to begin a letter, where I heartily despise the person to whom I write ; nor how to think of calling any body by the tender name of brother, whom reason and justice oblige me to detest as a man : yet the powerful voice of Nature subdues both my contempt and my indignation, and leads me on to try what can possibly be done to preserve his life and his character, before a publication of his infamy exposes him to inevitable danger and disgrace.

Do not imagine, Sir, that by insinuating an apprehension about your personal safety, I want to intimidate you into the practice of honour or humanity. I know too well, from the many broils in which you have been already engaged on account of your profligacy, that a man of violence receives additional courage from the appearance of danger ; and frequently thinks himself obliged to silence every dictate, both of reason and justice, lest his bravery should suffer the smallest imputation. Such a man I know you to be ; and am satisfied that, in the present case, you will sooner think of justifying the infamy of your conduct,

conduct, than dream of reparation: yet, Bob, by all the tenderness of our near relation, I conjure you to hear me this once with attention, as it is probably the last time I shall ever trouble you with my censures, or insult you with my advice.

And tell me really, is it thus I am to be repaid for all my solicitude about your happiness? Is the family I most valued, to be dishonoured; the young lady whom I most loved, to be destroyed; and my own peace of mind, to be eternally sacrificed; because I have, with an anxiety which few sisters ever felt to such a degree, been attentive to the minutest circumstance that could either improve your fortune, or increase your felicity? Is the sister, for whom you profess so cordial an affection, the chief person marked out for the exercise of your cruelty; and the friends who were dearest to her in the world, the principal people whom you could think of loading with the most aggravating dishonour, and the most piercing distress? O, Bob! could I have thought this of you! Wild as I judged you in general, I believed you a man of sentiment at bottom, and could by no means suppose that, in the unsuspecting hour of confidence, when the reputation of a considerable house and my tranquillity were at stake, that you would prove the worst of all assassins, and stab them both to the heart! The day after to-morrow, Bob, I had set apart as the most fortunate of my life; but, alas! I am now to mark it only with my tears, and to lament it as the primary source of all my present afflictions.

Your friend, Mr. Melmoth, has just left me; and, though I believed I should not be able to write in the aggravated distress of a real indisposition and an unexpected calamity, nevertheless, my heart is too full to be silent; and, when I consider not only what has happened, but what is likely to result from this melancholy affair, I am fearful of losing a single moment, till I try whether there may not yet be a possibility of bringing an accommodation about, and preventing the present misfortune from producing any additional cause of distress.

Mr. Melmoth, who loves you with the most friendly affection, has shewn me what you wrote to him in consequence of this unhappy affair; and I find that, notwithstanding the infamy

of your conduct on one side of the question, you are yet candid enough on the other to aim at no palliations. I am pleased to see you generous, though I bleed to find you guilty; and am still in hopes that this latent ember of principle may be fanned into something that will yet light us on to happiness.

In the whole course of your narrative, you have but one objection to Miss Mildmay, and that is even grounded upon a supposition no less ungenerous than unjust. You men, however, have very contracted notions on these occasions; and generally give up that very vanity, where a lady has shewn any fatal proofs of her regard, which first of all leads you to think of gaining her affections. As long as she keeps you at a distance, you think yourselves the only objects whom she can ever honour with her approbation; but if, in the unguarded fulness of heart, she should unfortunately lose sight of her circumspection, and sacrifice her honour through an extravagant tenderness, that moment you sink in your own opinion; that moment you construe what is the consequence of an unbounded partiality for yourselves into a levity of sentiment, and imagine every body else must be indulged with an equal degree of familiarity.

You, brother, who have so fine a person, and so finished an address, would think it strange if any body was to tell you, with a grave face, that you were utterly unable to engage a lady's affections; yet why may not you suppose that it was the influence which you had over Miss Mildmay's heart that drew her into this unhappy mistake? Had she been actuated by any illiberal levity of sentiment, do you imagine that she would have continued, through the most trying stages of a young woman's life, from sixteen up to twenty-one, without making any lapse injurious to her reputation? Do you suppose that, surrounded with admirers, and every day solicited by some of the finest young fellows in the kingdom, she would not have fallen a victim to a vehemence of constitution? Undoubtedly she would: but constitution had nothing at all to do in her character. You know I have been intimate in her family from her infancy, though you became acquainted with her so lately; and my residence, during Lord Harverham's life, upon the very spot with her, gave me numberless opportunities of

of knowing her thoroughly. In all this time, there never was a young lady who behaved with a nicer rectitude of conduct that had so many admirers; and you may be sure, if I had not the best opinion in the world, both of her head and her heart, I should not have been so desirous of having her for a sister.

So far, in reality, was Miss Mildmay from an indiscreet girl, that I place no inconsiderable share of her ruin down to the account of her very virtue. When she grew old enough to be distinguished by the addresses of the men, she always made me her confidante; and often, upon my asking her what objection she could have to such or such a person, she would reply, 'My dear Lady Havesham, the men are well enough to be sure, and so are their estates; but I do not find any thing peculiarly striking in their characters.'

As it was impossible but what, in the course of our intimacy, I should frequently talk of you, and dwell, with all the partiality of a sister, upon such of your actions as I thought worthy of approbation; Louisa would listen with a fixed attention, would declare you were a charming fellow, and wish that her papa could be prevailed upon to trust her up with me to town, or that the wildness of your disposition would permit you to make a visit to the country. She longed, she said, to see you, and begged I would contrive to bring you together; but, I do not know how it was, though I tried several times, some accident or other still happened to defeat my intentions. Matters went on in this manner for some time, till the very generous part which you acted by farmer Jenkins, who had been thrown into gaol for a considerable sum by his landlord, on account of resenting an unbecoming liberty with his daughter. As I was really charmed with the action myself, I told it to every body, and first of all I believe to Louisa. When she heard that you were totally uninterested in the affair; that Jenkins was an honest, worthy, poor man; that he had a large family, and was cruelly oppressed; when she heard that you not only paid all his debts, but even portioned out his daughter; and all this without being ever seen by any individual of the poor fellow's family; Louisa could not withstand her emotion; she breathed

short; shifted from one side of her seat to the other; and, at last, exclaiming that there was no possibility of bearing any more, she burst into a flood of tears. Thus, totally uninfluenced by passion or prejudice, and entirely actuated by real principle and genuine benignity, her very goodness of heart became a material source of her misfortunes, and laid the original foundation of all her present dishonour and distress. The contracted eye of a narrow minded libertinism, cannot, however, distinguish between those indiscretions which result from an excess of tenderness, and an excess of levity: attentive to one little object, it always sees a woman's actions on the least favourable side; and, conscious of its own unworthiness, supposes that nothing but an equal unworthiness can ever honour it so far as to commit a capital mistake.

But, of all the paltry contrivances which were ever designed to break off a match, surely your mode of parting with Miss Mildmay was the most ridiculously contemptible. And so you thought it perfectly sufficient to say you were ready to marry her, at the same time that by the insolence and cruelty of your artificial humility and concern, you forced her to the absolute necessity of rejecting you! As a man of honour, you thought it requisite to declare a willingness to fulfil your former engagements; yet what honourable compunction did you feel, when, in the basest opposition to your professions, you worked the unhappy young lady up to the cutting alternative, either of refusing you, or of meriting to be refused herself? What signifies the plausibility of the most solemn profession, when our actions give the lie to our words; or what signifies the deepest air of tenderness and veneration, if we secretly carry a dagger, to stab the object of all this tenderness and veneration to the heart? In fact, our hypocrisy, so far from alleviating the guilt, serves only to increase it's infamy; and indicates nothing more than our fear, or our shame, to perpetrate those crimes from which we are neither deterred by the voice of honour nor the sense of humanity. But what has a modern fine gentleman to do with honour or humanity! the mere outsidings of either are sufficient for his purpose; and, so he observes a formal, frigid sort

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of deference for his word, he becomes equally dead to the dictates of his reason, and the feelings of his heart.

Yet, if I am astonished at the pitiful contrivance by which you obtained your *honourable* discharge from Louisa, what must I think of that barbarous mortification which you express at finding she could bear the loss of a worthless libertine with such an exalted share of fortitude? And so your pride was wounded, because the unhappy young lady did not discover a greater share of wretchedness, and manifest a much keener sensibility of distress? Oh, Bob, Bob! how unmanly, how inhuman is this declaration! But why am I surprized at partial unmanlinesses, or particular inhumanities, where the whole conduct has been uniformly destitute of manhood and humanity? Your behaviour, Sir, is entirely of a piece; and my contempt is as much excited by your pride, as my detestation is raised by your barbarity.

I suppose, Sir, it would have yielded a most delicious feast to your vanity, had Miss Mildmay fallen at your feet, and in an agony of despair implored you to change your cruel resolution. I suppose you would have felt the most exquisite gratification, to see the unhappy young lady deluged in her own tears, and tearing her fine face in all the extravagance of united grief and distraction. Thank God, you were disappointed! Thank God, there is one woman who can spurn a worthless lover from her presence, even while she acknowledges his possession of her heart! What you may think of her behaviour I know not; but, for my own part, her conduct since her first indiscretion has actually raised her in my opinion; and the generous sensibility which she has shewn in consequence of her error, gives her a preference to millions who have never erred at all.

Pride, insensibility, and want of solicitation, have given a negative degree of excellence to and preserved the purity of numbers, who were neither protected by principle nor reason; but a woman who on the eve of marriage with a man she passionately loves, a woman whose heart, by the consideration of the approaching union, and the exchange of a thousand tender vows that naturally antecede the ceremony, is melted into the softest degree of con-

fidence, and thrown totally off, her guard; such a woman, I say, if in the unsuspecting moment of her soul she even forgets the more rigid though necessary punctilios of behaviour, has infinite extenuations to offer in her defence; but if, upon her recovery of recollection, she is capable of acting with dignity and sentiment, the goodness of her mind I think sufficiently removes the imputation of levity, and renders her greatly superior to those who boast of their own fortitude, without experiencing the force of the same temptation.

Thus, my dear Bob, have I opened my whole heart to you on this subject; and now the only answer which I either desire or expect to this letter is, your immediate presence in town, to try every possible means of a reconciliation with Miss Mildmay. Do not be afraid of looking mean when you are about the performance of a good action: a blush upon such an occasion will become you mightily; and even in proportion to the greatness of your confusion, I shall be apt to estimate both the benevolence of your heart and the depth of your understanding. Should you, however, still continue attached to your ridiculous delicacy, and, through a romantick principle of pride, give up a woman who is in actual possession of your heart, you must also give up a sister who loves you, as sister perhaps never loved brother before; for, though I candidly own it will give me the greatest of all distresses to discontinue such a correspondence as should subsist between two people so united by blood, and so cemented by friendship, yet I positively repeat, that unless you shew yourself a man of principle on this important occasion, you will never more hear a syllable from your greatly afflicted, yet still affectionate sister,

THEO. HAVERSHAM.

LETTER XI.

SIR ROBERT HAROLD TO CHARLES
MELMOTH, ESQ.

DEAR CHARLES,

YOU can scarcely conceive the anxiety I have laboured under since my last letter: every moment that I was
absent

absent from Louisa, I thought would have enabled me to banish her from my memory with more readiness and certainty; but, I do not know how it is, she presses with an incessant violence to my recollection, and gains every moment an additional share of power, in proportion as I flattered myself her power would have diminished. What an unaccountable fellow am I, Charles, that I never know my own mind for four and twenty hours together! Before I was sure of Miss Mildmay, I was impatient to become master of her affections: when I had obtained these affections, I instantly sunk into a state of indifference and apathy, and for some time dreaded the day of marriage, as a condemned criminal would dread the day of execution. Well, having at last worked myself up into a real passion for her, the intervention of an unexpected circumstance induced me to give her up; and now that I have given her up, I find I shall be as eager as ever to regain her. The only way I see, after all, is fairly to marry her; for then, let me change my mind never so often, my person you know will be bound in such a manner, as to keep me from the commission of fresh absurdities.

I have just this moment received your letter, and my sister Haversham's. By these I find you are endeavouring to imitate, as far as you are capable of imitating any thing worthy, the character of Belford in Richardson's *Clarissa Harlow*. Nay, to render this imitation the more striking, you treat me as if I were just such another contemptible blockhead as Lovelace, who did not imagine there was a modest woman existing. Now, you know very well, Melmoth, that I am rather vain in affectation than in reality; and though I sometimes talk away about my person and my address, you must acknowledge that, unlike Richardson's hero, I never insinuate that either is irresistible. In short, you know that, even in my wildest connection with the sex, I still retained some degree of principle; and have frequently, from motives of humanity, avoided an intercourse which he would have solicited with the utmost assiduity. Between him and me the comparison is still more remote: for he was continually endeavouring to undermine a virtue which he had no reason whatsoever to

suspect; whereas I never entertained a thought injurious to Miss Mildmay, but succeeded with her entirely from a trivial accident. This is not all; the arts which Lovelace made use of to trepan *Clarissa* were to the last degree infamous and unmanly: his carrying her to *Sinclair's*, a common brothel, and his introduction of the two strumpets to her in the character of ladies of quality, are more flagrant instances of turpitude than if he had actually administered a sleeping draught, or forced her the moment he got her from her father's. In the latter cases, youth and passion might afford his crime some shadow of palliation; whereas, in the former, his schemes are so tedious and refined, that they become utterly repugnant to the fire of youth, and the fury of passion; and indicate either the most palpable villainy of heart, or the most palpable want of inclination. His reason, too, for delaying to marry the woman he loves is a pleasant one: he fears she is actually virtuous. O, Charles! how opposite is the motive of my conduct! But hush, recollection! Down, busy devil; down! I have waked a scorpion in that retrospect, which stings me to distraction!

Your letter, Charles, is, as you justly call it, a very dull one; however, you are a happy fellow to make even your stupidity a means of shewing your understanding. My sister Haversham, without the advantage of your extensive erudition, writes fifty times more to the purpose, though I dare say you think her infinitely your inferior, both as to elegance of style and energy of argument. Do not, however, be offended at the justice I do her in this place; for you are a mighty favourite with her ladyship; and, I dare say may, in time, aspire at a match with her—*Abigail Harper*.

Notwithstanding these attempts to be merry, I am fearful my endeavours at a joke will be to the full as unfortunate as your endeavours at letter-writing. I shall not, like you, however, make the ridiculous parade of an apology: the business of this scrawl is to beg you will instantly go to Lady Haversham's, and inform her I am every thing she could wish me; that I shall set off to-morrow morning for London, and be with her by breakfast. In the mean time, if she would contrive to see Louisa, who must

be in town by this, it would oblige me highly, as I know an interview between them would pave the readiest way to a reconciliation. Perhaps Miss Mildmay, when she finds my sister so strenuous, and sees how ready I am myself to heal this unlucky breach, may give herself some airs, and think of treating me with indifference. If she should, by Heaven—Yet, surely, I have deserved not only her indifference, but her scorn. Have I not cruelly exposed her to the ridicule of the whole world, and the resentment of her whole family! Have I not equally endangered her reputation and her life, destroyed her fortune, and blasted her felicity! Yes, Melmoth, I have deserved not only her scorn but her absolute detestation. I am astonished, when I review the state of the case, how I could be weak enough to prefer a number of the most affecting evils, to the precarious hazard at worst of a single misfortune. Mrs. Mildmay's letter cost me many tears, and I could not read Lady Haverham's without an equal mixture of shame and distress: that worthiest, noblest of women, Charles, is entitled to every return both of my gratitude and affection. Had it not been for her indefatigable industry, even in opposition to the manifest call of her interest, and the dictates of her love, my father, you know, would have disinherited me. Her marriage with Lord Haverham, a man three times older than herself, was the price of my pardon; and yet, at the same time that Theodosia yielded to this match for my preservation, I knew her whole soul was devoted to my old friend Sir Edward Wilmington. Poor Sir Edward fell in the glorious affair of Minden; and, though I never hinted the circumstance to you before, yet he sacrificed himself on that memorable day, by running into unnecessary dangers, merely through his incapacity to survive the loss of my sister. And does not this sister, Melmoth, deserve every thing at my hands? Go instantly to her when you read this, and tell her, that, for the remainder of my days, I shall be entirely guided by her directions: tell her, that without the continuation of her friendship I never can be happy; and that, next to the forgiveness of the Deity himself, her's is the most essential requisite to my felicity. I blush, Melmoth, to be out-

done in generosity; but this exalted woman always threw me at a distance; and, from my infancy up, continually excited both my envy and my admiration. You see that, in all this readiness of acquiescence, Charles, I never once insinuate the pleasure it will necessarily give myself to make up matters with Louisa; nevertheless, my heart is transported at the thought, and I even love my friends the better for thus taking part against my pride, in favour of my inclination.

The hints which you insinuate relative to consequences, Charles, in case I do not accommodate with the Mildmay family, would give me but little uneasiness, was I ever so pitiful a paltrone, and ever so much disinclined to the match. Colonel Mildmay is a young fellow of spirit, but he is also a man of understanding: he must therefore see how preposterous it would be to think of revenging the quarrel of a sister, who, notwithstanding my behaviour, would, I dare say, be much better pleased at his fall than mine. I have been more than once challenged by the brothers of young ladies, Charles; and I always found the dear girls thought the fellows extremely impertinent who presumed to call me to an account. There are few sisters, Melmoth, like Lady Haverham; on the contrary, most women would much sooner wish to see a brother stretched dead upon the field of combat, than to hear that an infamous rascal, who had destroyed both their peace and their reputation, had met with the smallest accident. For my own part, dearly as I love Lady Haverham, was it possible for her to be ruined and deserted, I should never think of calling the villain to an account. After the last intimacy, a woman always espouses the cause of her lover, and a brother has of course little occasion to interfere, when, at the very moment he is hazarding his life in the cause of a sister, she is secretly praying for the success of his antagonist. Colonel Mildmay knows the world, and will never dream of exposing his life in a quarrel, where there is no probability even of meeting with thanks. Be easy, therefore, dear Charles, on this head, and believe to be yours unalterably,

ROBERT HAROLD.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

SIR ROBERT HAROLD TO CHARLES
MELMOTH, ESQ.

DEAR CHARLES, BRISTOL.

YOU will undoubtedly be surprized, (after reading the firm resolution which I made in my last, of going instantly to London, and accommodating the unhappy affair with Miss Mildmay) to hear that, instead of following that resolution, I am this moment preparing to quit the kingdom; and shall, in all probability, never more see Louisa's face, nor set a foot in England. O Charles! to what a fate am I reserved! one misfortune treads fast upon the heels of another; and the worthy, though misguided Colonel Mildmay, is perhaps, by this time, dead, through a rash indignation at the fate of his sister.

I was just stepping into my chaise at the Crown in Reading, when a gentleman in a post-chariot and six, who was driving at a furious rate, accidentally seeing me, ordered his people to stop; and coming out of the carriage, slapped me familiarly upon the shoulder, and expressed no little astonishment at seeing me in Reading; saying, he thought I had been considerably better employed than in driving round the country. The meeting was an unlucky one, Charles, for the gentleman was no other than Colonel Mildmay; he was going down to his father's, to be present at my marriage with Louisa, and now desired me to step into his carriage, as it would be much more agreeable to ride together than to travel in separate vehicles.

You may be sure that, if the unexpected appearance of the colonel disconcerted me at first, my confusion was no way abated by the proposal of accompanying him to his father's. I was excessively awkward, and made some stammering sort of a reply, which I fancy rendered me curiously contemptible. The colonel perceiving me so much embarrassed, demanded, with a faultering tone, and a look of the utmost apprehension, if all was right, and if I still continued on a proper footing with Louisa. This question was a home one, Melmoth; and to evade it would have been the lowest degree of timidity: I

therefore hinted, that a little accident had intervened, which must necessarily occasion a short procrastination of our nuptials, but that I had no doubt of every thing's being settled to the mutual satisfaction of both families.

This reply threw the colonel into the greatest consternation; his brows were in an instant stretched a full inch above their natural situation; his eyes were fixed into a stare of unutterable astonishment; his mouth insensibly widened to a horror of distension; and his complexion, which the moment before was remarkably glowing, now assumed a white of the most deadly kind imaginable: at last, with an accent scarce audible, while a tear imperceptibly stole down his cheek, he desired me to step into the inn with him, and insinuated that he expected to be made acquainted with the particulars. I accordingly assented to his proposal; and a private room being ordered, we went up stairs together, and for some moments sat in a state of silent anxiety, each expecting that the other would open first, while each nevertheless dreaded to enter upon a conversation.

The colonel, however, finding that I was no way likely to begin the discourse, and naturally recollecting that, as he had been the proposer of the intended explanation, it became him to break silence, exclaimed with an interrogatory repetition, 'And so, Sir Robert, an affair has happened, which must inevitably delay your marriage with Louisa?'—'Yes, colonel; and I sincerely lament the occasion of that delay, as I flattered myself with a hope of being the happiest man in the world a little earlier.'—'As you are kind enough to lament the occasion of this delay,' replied the colonel, 'you can have no objection to make me acquainted with it. Shall I therefore beg, Sir Robert, to know the real motive of procrastinating matters? From the very great expedition used in the former part of this negotiation, a delay was what I little looked for, and must confess that it not only surprises, but affects me. Louisa, Sir Robert, is very near my heart, and ours is a family which must not be insulted with impunity.'

You may naturally imagine, Charles, that this menacing speech, together with the air which accompanied it, was not

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at all calculated to work upon a temper like mine: I therefore surveyed the colonel with a look of cold indifference, and answered, that Louisa was to the full as close to my heart, as she could possibly be to his; and as for resenting any insult which might be offered to the honour of his family, that was a circumstance which must raise him in every body's consideration.

From the visible coldness of my reply, the colonel, I saw, endeavoured to rein-in his temper as well as he was able, till he had more substantial grounds for indicating a resentment. 'Sir Robert,' says he, 'excuse my warmth; I love my sister, and I feel for my family: gratify my impatience therefore in one word; and, like the man of honour I believe you to be, like the brother I hope to find you, tell me that neither has been injured by your means, and I shall be the happiest man in the universe.'

Here, Melmoth, was a lunge which required all my ingenuity to parry; yet, when I considered that Louisa herself had published every thing between us, and when I saw the colonel must necessarily hear the whole story in the most aggravating light in a few hours, I thought it would look like the rankest cowardice to prevaricate, however it might wound my sensibility in the tenderest part to make mention of any thing to the disadvantage of Louisa. Putting therefore the best face I possibly could upon the matter, I candidly told the colonel, that the excess of my passion for his sister had actually led me into an indiscretion which occasioned some uneasiness; that Louisa had, in consequence, been sent up to London, and that I was then on my journey after her, to fall at her feet, and to solicit a reconciliation. I added, that I flattered myself he would exert his interest in my favour, since there was no undoing what was done, and since that was the only means of restoring his sister's tranquillity, and securing the honour of his family.

There is no possibility, Melmoth, of painting the astonishment in which this relation threw the colonel; the surprise which he before manifested was nothing to that which now took the entire possession of his countenance. At length his wonder giving way to his indignation, a kind of fury seemed to flash

from his eyes, and he fiercely leaned across the table, repeating, in a menacing accent, 'And so, Sir, you have actually ruined Louisa Mildmay!'

I do not know how it is, Melmoth, but there is something in the nature of guilt which takes away our fortitude, and reduces us to a state of the most contemptible timidity. You know I have as much courage as the generality of young fellows, and you know also what unhappy instances I have given of my knowledge in the weapons; yet, by all that is good, I could scarcely sustain the terror of Mildmay's eye on this occasion. Conscious how much right he had to be offended; conscious of my own guilt, and Lady Haversham's letter still ringing in my ears; I shrunk in a manner into myself, and seemed fearful of encountering the shock of his indignation. I sat dumb, irresolute, confounded; my vacant eye held rivetted to the floor, and such a visible agitation in my whole person, as would have given the colonel but a poor idea of my spirit, had he not been already pretty well acquainted with my character. The colonel, however, soon gave me all my customary courage, by exclaiming that I was a villain; a cowardly, contemptible villain; who had basely made use of the most infamous arts to seduce the inexperienced innocence of a beautiful young lady, and to blast the reputation of a family, with which I was utterly unworthy to be connected. The colonel was proceeding in this manner, and giving an unbounded loose to a storm of incoherent fury, when I interrupted him. 'Colonel,' said I, 'this is language with which I have been totally unacquainted; and it is language which would possibly cost you very dear, was I not sensible you have some cause to be offended with me; and was I not desirous of shewing every regard, which I am now able to manifest, both for the honour of your family and the peace of your beautiful sister. I grant my behaviour has been culpable, greatly culpable, and it is with infinite concern I reflect on the anxiety which my misbehaviour has already produced. What more can I either say or do? An altercation between you and me is much more likely to increase the general unhappiness of our friends than to remove it. You know

‘ know that, should it even be my lot to fall in this altercation, neither your house nor your sister can be benefited by that circumstance; whereas, on the contrary, should you be unsuccessful, both must naturally experience an addition of the most exquisite distress. Do me the justice, Colonel Mildmay, to believe that this expostulation is not the result of timidity: I have already injured your house, and it must be the most pressing necessity indeed, which can oblige me to run even the hazard of aggravating my fault. Do not, therefore, by indulging an injudicious warmth, either prevent me from the possibility of making a reparation, or expose your family to the hazard of new misfortunes. Happiness is yet within our reach, and it must be very much your fault if it is snatched from our hands.’

This long harangue, Charles, I pronounced with an uncommon degree of temper; but I could easily see that it had little effect upon Colonel Mildmay: full of that ridiculous sort of honour which is above listening to reason, he endeavoured to break in upon me several times; and, when I had done, instead of moderating his passion, he rather seemed to give it an additional force; swearing that, though a cool hypocritical speech might silence the resentment of his sister, he was not to be duped from his purpose by the most specious plausibilities, but would vindicate the honour of his family, and proceed instantly to the necessary means of redress.

‘ And pray, colonel, said I, ‘ how do you purpose to obtain this redress?’ — ‘ Purpose!’ returned he shortly; ‘ as a man of honour. Be pleased to stay for me but two minutes, and you shall be more fully satisfied.’ So saying, he ran down stairs to his chariot, which was all the time waiting at the door, and took out a case of pistols, (for I could see every thing distinctly through the window :) these he concealed under a furtout which he had on, and coming up with a lightning-like expedition to the room in which he left me, entered and bolted the door. Having done thus, he marched up directly to me, and swore, with a determined energy of execration, that unless I instantly accepted of one, and stood

upon my defence, he would, without any farther ceremony, shoot me through the head. All this time, Charles, I kept my temper with a stoicism that was really astonishing. ‘ Colonel,’ said I, as he pronounced the last menace, ‘ consider that you have a man before you, who is not easily intimidated; but who, as he wishes to repair, instead of aggravating injuries, is willing to overlook the insults which you have offered him, and to embrace you as a brother and a friend. For your sister’s sake, Sir, consider——’ ‘ Damnation seize my sister!’ interrupted he, wildly; ‘ it is not her honour which I want to vindicate, but my own. She is an infamous strumpet, and you are a cowardly, hypocritical scoundrel! Take the pistol, Sir; this moment take it, and defend yourself: for, by all that is holy, if you hesitate another instant, I will anticipate the justice of the gibbet, and rid the world of as great a villain as ever dishonoured it!’ This language, Charles, was no longer to be borne: the scandalous epithet with which he branded poor Louisa, and the brutality of insolence with which he treated all my concessions, entirely destroyed my fortitude; so that now forgetting every consideration, I snatched the pistol out of his hand, and retiring to a space, which he himself had pointed out, I fired, and wounded him so dangerously in the groin, that he instantly fell upon the floor, discharging his pistol, however, as he fell; the contents of which just drew a little blood from my ear, but did me no farther injury, unless burning a curl of the side hair may be termed an injury to a fellow so fond of dressing as your humble servant.

I ran to the colonel the moment I saw him down, and offered him every assistance in my power; but he was now in a manner frantick: the anguish of his wound, and the mortification of finding I come off so easily, threw him into an extravagant passion, and he raved at me, his sister, and his own unexecuting hand, with all the fury of an implacable resentment and a disappointed revenge; disclaiming every consolation which I was capable of offering, and swearing he would still pursue me to the utmost confines of the world, till he had sacrificed me to the manes of his murdered reputation. Finding him in this

this temper, and knowing that the sooner I provided for my own safety the better, as I found from the nature of his wound that his situation was dangerous, I marched down stairs to my chaise with my handkerchief to my ear, and drove immediately off towards Bristol, giving previous directions, however, to the people of the house, who had not yet been alarmed, to take the most speedy and effectual care of the colonel.

My first care on my arrival at Bristol was to send Edwards in quest of some vessel immediately ready to sail, and in less than an hour he came back with intelligence that the captain of a ship bound to Rotterdam was preparing to set off the next tide. As it was a matter of indifference to me which way I pursued my rout, I ordered him to agree with the Dutchman, and sat down to give you an account of this unfortunate accident before I left the kingdom. You cannot imagine, Charles, how miserable it has made me; no less in disappointing the eagerness of my wishes to be reconciled to Louisa, than in loading the two families with additional distress. Neither Lady Havesham nor Miss Mildmay will ever believe, but that I have been entirely to blame in this cursed rencounter; and should the colonel even recover, the danger into which I have thrown his life, must necessarily impede an accommodation with his sister. Then he is so implacable in his resentments, and his father is so carried away by the ridiculous notions of family reputation, that I much question whether he would not believe himself rather bound in honour to treat me with the grossest indignities, than to think of listening to any overtures which I may make towards a reconciliation. How cautiously, my dear Melmoth, should young fellows of any principle be in their conduct to women of character; since a single indiscretion can be productive of such numberless misfortunes! Here have I, with as little villainy of intention as ever influenced the bosom of giddy-headed youth, with little more in fact to charge myself than a mere want of circumspection, destroyed the reputation of a woman whom I passionately love; converted the smiling expectations of her whole family into anguish and disgrace; robbed her brother, perhaps, of his life; and sacrificed not only my own peace of

mind for ever, but covered all my friends with confusion and distress. How some people, Melmoth, can preserve their tranquillity with such a scene before them, is to me astonishing. A man, not utterly divested of feeling, must look with horror on himself where he has been the cause of such a complicated wretchedness. For my own part, thoughtless as I have been in many connections with the sex, the consequences which have resulted from this affair with Miss Mildmay, make me detest what I formerly esteemed the principal source of felicity, and convince me that a man of gallantry is no less a contemptible than a dangerous character. O Charles! could my whole fortune recover that cheerful serenity of mind which I possessed but a week ago, how readily would I think of making the purchase! But happiness is totally incompatible with guilt, and it is but just that he who is instrumental in the misery of others, should experience the sharpest stings of misery himself.

Before I conclude this letter, I must, however, mention some things to you relative to Miss Mildmay. By her mother's letter I understand that she is to be supplied with money only as the good old lady can conveniently spare it, till time can so work upon the obstinate temper of her father, as to obtain some regular allowance for her establishment. All she has in the world is five hundred pounds; this is but a small sum for a lady of her fashion to live upon a whole year, though I suppose she will not in her present circumstances chuse to be very publick: however, that she may suffer as little as possible upon my account, contrive, through Lady Havesham's means, some method of making the dear girl receive a thousand pounds a year to support a carriage, and to purchase all the other conveniences which she has been used to in her father's house. I need not tell you, that the task I now impose is a difficult one, and that the execution of it will demand the utmost delicacy and address. Louisa is all soul; yet nobody knows how to give things in a better manner than my sister; and, if there is a possibility of managing the matter, I am sensible she will be able to effect it. It is unnecessary to say that I must on no account appear in the affair. If Miss Mildmay could be
cheated

cheated into an opinion, that the allowance is made privately by her father, who is unwilling to shew how much he still loves her; or if—but, damn it! I am all the time forgetting that her family would wonder by what method she was enabled to keep an equipage; and, perhaps, from an opinion that it was by some sinister means, (you understand me) become less inclined to forgive her: this way, therefore, will never do. Yet stay, I have it.

Suppose my sister was secretly to make Mrs. Darnel the allowance I have been talking of for Louisa's ease; I have some little knowledge of Mrs. Darnel, and I fancy her circumstances are none of the best. Under an affectation of great gravity I am sure she conceals an insuperable pride, and seems to despise that glitter from principle, which she is unable to enjoy from the narrowness of her fortune: Lady Haverham may therefore set up a chariot for Mrs. Darnel; Louisa, you know, by residing with her will have it at command, and Mrs. Darnel shall have it rendered worth her while to present her amiable cousin with a sufficient sum of money, as opportunities occur, for all her other contingencies. Mrs. Darnel, I see, has obligations to the Mildmay family: but whatever she loses by her politeness on this occasion, shall be doubled to her by an annuity, or how she pleases; she may talk of a ticket in the lottery, you know, or make any other common excuse for the alteration of appearances.

And yet, Melmoth, I am somehow sorry Louisa is to be at Mrs. Darnel's; she is a woman of whom I entertain no very great opinion. I have been three or four times in her company at accidental visits, and always found her so humble and so fawning, so religious and so sentimental, that I am fearful my poor Louisa will have but a disagreeable companion. An excess of humility to those who are our superiors in fortune, is always a sign of a mean mind; the heart is unworthy of respect, which never seems inclined to assert its natural equality; and I would much sooner commence a friendship with those who are perpetually contradicting me, than with those who have a smile for every thing I say, and never take the liberty to contradict me at all.

The master of the vessel has this moment called to take me on board; till

I hear from you, I shall take up my residence at the great Marshal Turenne's in Rotterdam. I have used the house once already, and found the people very careful of my letters. Pray write immediately, and let your packet be a large one. Enquire minutely into the colonel's situation, and tell me what is said by Lady Haverham and Louisa. O Charles! adversity is your only forcible moralist: the pangs which I now suffer in consequence of my folly give me a higher veneration for virtue than the works of our most celebrated philosophers; and I find more wisdom is to be obtained from a moment's experience, than from a whole eternity of idle speculation. But when reflection comes too late, of what service is it to moralize! God bless you, therefore, my dear Melmoth; and believe me to be, with an everlasting attachment, your friend,

ROBERT HAROLD.

LETTER XIII.

MISS HARRIOT BEAUCLERK TO
MISS LOUISA MILD MAY.

O My sweet friend, my dearest Louisa, are our sorrows never to have an end! and is every day, that should mitigate the severity of our fortune, to bring us nothing but an aggravation of distress! Your poor brother, I cannot keep it from you, was a few hours ago brought to us desperately wounded by that barbarous villain Harold, whom he accidentally met at the Crown in Reading; and there, with more courage than discretion, called to an account for his infamous behaviour to the most beautiful and most worthy of her sex. Pistols were the cursed weapons they fought with, and your brother received a shot a little above the groin: the ball was extracted by an eminent surgeon at Reading, and the colonel was brought home in a litter, as the physicians judged it better to remove him, even such a number of miles, than to let him remain in any place where he could not have proper accommodations.

Your poor mother, when she saw him borne in, fainted away, and was immediately removed to her own apartment; where, after applying the necessary

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cessary restoratives, we happily recovered her: she then told me that this was nothing more than what she expected, and that she was the less affected at the shock, as she had rendered it continually familiar to her imagination. 'Yet, Miss Beauclerk,' continued the venerable lady, 'it is a severe stroke, though an expected one; but God's will be done!' A large tear then rolled down her fine face, which she endeavoured to restrain, as she saw how much I was touched with the general misfortune; after this, she sent for the surgeon and doctor who attended the colonel from Reading, and begged they would give her their candid opinion of his situation. 'Do not be afraid to tell me, gentlemen,' said she, endeavouring at a smile; 'for, though I have all the tenderness of a mother, I hope I also possess the resignation of a Christian.' The gentlemen looked at one another, in admiration both of her piety and her fortitude, and very freely owned that the colonel was in some danger, but that they were nevertheless in hope, if they could prevent a fever, to see him tolerably recovered in a little time. The gentlemen then preparing to withdraw, I whispered the doctor to feel her own pulse, which he did in a very respectful manner, and advised her to lose a few ounces of blood: she assented to the motion; and the doctor, at going out, gave me a look of benignity for my recollection, that indicated a goodness of heart in himself, which has raised him not a little in my estimation. After your mother had been bled, we prevailed upon her to lie down, and I left her just now in a sweet doze, which I flatter myself will do her a world of benefit.

As my attention at your brother's first coming in was called off by your mother's distress, I sent for Butler, his Irish servant, who is principally employed about his person, to be informed of particulars. The poor fellow, though deeply affected for his master's accident, told me he should ever love and honour his old master, for bearing up so like a man against the stroke of misfortune. 'Madam,' said he, 'instead of exclaiming, as the generality of fathers would have done on such an occasion, and censuring the rashness of his son, he took hold of my master's hand, kissed it with an air of inconceivable

satisfaction, and praised him for the attention which he had shewn to the honour of his family: the only regret he testified, was at hearing that the person who had injured his honour was not hurt in the engagement; "for," had he fallen," said my old master, "that would have been a great satisfaction." And so it would, you know, Madam,' continued the honest Hibernian. 'The honour of a good family is a very nice affair; I am come of as good a family myself as any in Ireland, and know how to feel for such a misfortune as has happened to my master's.'

Though I could not help smiling at the egotism of poor Butler, I nevertheless desired him to answer my questions, and not teaze me with his reflections. He therefore proceeded to inform me that your father and brother were both more than ever incensed against Harold, and that your brother had solemnly sworn to call him to a second account the moment he recovered from the present accident; that your father, however, had been forced out of the room from the colonel, as talking did much injury to the latter; and that the old gentleman, upon withdrawing, said something about altering his will: Butler added, that your brother desired a visit from me above all things, and he believed would request a favour of that kind, if he was any way better in the morning.

You conjure me by all our friendship, my dearest Louisa, to give you a minute account of every thing; to mitigate no description, and to conceal no distress: I obey you, though against my inclination, as I know how a sensibility like yours must be wounded by a repetition of some circumstances; but, my sweet, my ever amiable friend, exert your utmost resolution, and prepare to meet those evils with fortitude which are impossible to be avoided. True magnanimity is never seen till the day of distress; and those have naturally the noblest minds, who make the firmest stand against affliction.

From some things which have escaped your brother since I wrote the foregoing part of this letter, I have reason to imagine that Sir Robert Harold was not altogether so much in fault in the late rencounter as we were inclined to imagine, Colonel Mildmay himself acknow-
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ledges that he used every provocation before he could prevail upon the baronet to engage; and he even intimates, that Sir Robert was actually going to town with an intention of throwing himself at your feet, and imploring your forgiveness. If this was the case, it was certainly rash in the colonel to carry matters to such an extremity: he ought to consider, that the happiness of more people than one is dependent upon his welfare; and that the hazarding of his life may increase the general misfortune, but can never have the smallest tendency to remove it. But he has too nice a sensibility for his own ease, and is frequently running into real ills to avoid imaginary misfortunes. You know, my dear, my partiality for your brother; and you also know that, on the present occasion, prudence will not allow me to give such a loose to my feelings, as I should naturally shew, were we on such a footing as you have frequently wished us. Perhaps, it may be something of this very partiality which induces me to wish that, in the course of the recent transaction, he had made use of a little less spirit, and a little more understanding. You cannot conceive, my dearest Louisa, how it distresses me to think of his situation; to find myself in the same house with him, and yet to be under a necessity of seeming only a friendly partaker in the common calamity. This cruel constraint is too much; and I pine, I sicken, I die for an interview with him, though I am sensible such a circumstance in his present condition must fill me with the most poignant affliction. Hitherto he has never said a single syllable that could furnish a reasonable hope of his considering me with any tenderness of prepossession; but he has nevertheless been studious to gain my good opinion, though he has declined to solicit for my love; and I have a strong notion that he intends to be particular the very first opportunity: my heart at least interprets things in that sense, and who knows—But, my sweet Louisa, forgive me; how could I possibly indulge the most distant thought of happiness, while you are sinking under the deepest distress, and while the life of the dear youth is at stake, on whom my whole happiness so materially depends! Oh, Louisa! excuse the woman at my heart, which, in spite of my best efforts, would talk about your brother, though the share

which you know I partake in his danger must add in a very considerable degree to your anxiety. If possible, I will forbear to mention him with regard, that I may avoid wounding so nice a part of your sensibility; since I am conscious with what a generous concern you feel for your Harriot, and am but too apprehensive that this concern will lead you into some self-accusations, equally injurious to the recovery of your own peace and the stability of her friendship.

In my last, I told you that my mother, upon hearing what an unexpected cloud had overcast the happiness of your family, gave me permission to stay for a few days with her dear Mrs. Mildmay; tenderly, as well as wisely considering, that, in the present state of things, her venerable friend would naturally want somebody to soothe the anguish of her mind, who was really interested in her distress. You cannot conceive how kindly the worthy lady your mother has received this little instance of our attachment: she wept over me when I mentioned my design to remain at Mildmay Hall till my attendance became unnecessary; and, ardently pressing me to her bosom, condescended to kiss my cheek, and called me her true Harriot, her other Louisa. Ever since, she has honoured me with a more than common share of her confidence; is desirous of being alone with me upon every occasion; and you may easily conjecture, my ever amiable girl, what subject principally engrosses our conversation.

Just this moment she sent for me to her bed-side: having been some minutes awake, and seeing my fingers marked with ink, 'I suppose, my love,' said she, 'you have been writing to poor 'Louisa?' I replied in the affirmative; and insinuated what a consolation it would be to you, if you were honoured with her remembrance. 'My dear Miss Beauclerk,' returned she, 'have not I already told you, that she is still my child; that she even may write to me if she pleases, and that I shall always consider her unhappy fall with a much greater share of pity than resentment? To be candid with you, my obliging love,' continued the dear lady, 'I am more to be blamed for leaving Sir Robert Harold and Louisa so frequently together, than either is for abusing

the confidence which I reposed in their discretion. Young people, where they tenderly love each other, and where a day is set apart for their marriage, are very dangerous companions; the woman loses all her fear, and the man all his veneration; they become insensibly more and more familiar, till their imaginations are intensely heated, and their recollection totally lost. In such a situation, the consequence is but too obvious; the woman wakes into distraction, and the man into doubt or disgust: she trembles for his constancy, and he fears for her virtue; recriminations naturally ensue, and they either go to the altar with sentiments very little calculated to preserve their future felicity, or break off in such a manner as draws a general disgrace upon the woman and her family. Oh, Miss Beauclerk! why did not I consider this matter with propriety, when such a consideration would have been essential to my happiness! Why would I expose the darling of my heart to dangers which it was scarcely possible for her to avoid, or ensnare the inexperience of my child with unnecessary temptations? But, alas! *because* she was my child, I must foolishly suppose her above the reach of human infirmities, and be guilty of an inattention in my own conduct, which I would have severely censured in the mother of any body else.—Oh, my sweet Louisa! your doating mother's extravagant fondness has been the cause of all our calamities; and your indiscretion was nothing more than the natural result of her mistaken partiality!

In this manner, my beautiful friend, did the generously-minded lady proceed; while my tears could only testify the warmth of my approbation. She was pleased to see me touched; and more than once kissing away the drops from my cheeks, declared she was never sorry to see a young lady miserable at a scene of distress, because those only could continue unmoved who were utterly destitute of humanity and understanding. Your father came in about this time; and seeing both our eyes red, assigned, in the fury of his resentment, a very different cause from the real one. 'What do you cry for, my dear?' said he to your venerable mother; 'If the villain, who has brought all this af-

fiction upon our heads is not yet sacrificed, be satisfied that justice shall overtake him in the end; for I have a gallant boy still living, who shall pursue him with unceasing vengeance till he has washed away the disgrace of our family in his blood. Oh! had the inhospitable monster but fallen to-day, how light should I have made of my son's misfortune! But he shall yet feel me: by the great God of heaven and earth he shall! And so, my dear, be pacified.

Oh, Mr. Mildmay,' replied your mother, 'too much blood has been spilled already; and, if something which I have casually heard from Miss Beauclerk of Sir Robert's repentance be true, I must say that it would be much better to think of an accommodation, than to expose ourselves to any additional share of distress. Lady Haversham is an excellent woman, and I have strong reason to imagine that her influence will have every weight we could wish with the thoughtless young man her brother: suffer me, therefore, my dear, to make an enquiry into the foundation of Miss Beauclerk's intelligence, that if we find—'

'Find what, Madam!' interrupted your father, with an uncommon degree of vehemence: 'You would not surely have the dishonour of your family pass unpunished, nor think of receiving a villain as your son-in-law, who has covered you with the most infamous disgrace! Would you give your daughter to a ruffian, who has possibly murdered your son? or would you basely beg of Lady Haversham to speak a good word for us to her scoundrel of a brother? Are we reduced at once so low as to kneel where we have been barbarously injured; and must we think of supplicating a monster for compassion, whose hands have been equally steeped in our reputation and our blood? Fie, Mrs. Mildmay, fie! this is a language unworthy both of your character and your descent: and could I find a thought of so dishonourable a nature rising in my bosom, I should do instant justice on the traitor, and stab it to the heart.'

Your mother made no reply to this but by a shower of tears; which your father being utterly unable to withstand, he flew out of the room, leaving me to give the dear lady what consolation I could,

I could, which in fact was but very trifling, as I stood in no little need of consolation myself. Such, my sweet friend, is the state of matters at Mildmay Hall. Your brother, though his wounds pain him considerably, slept a full hour this evening: so Butler just now acquainted me; adding, that he and the surgeon were to sit up all night with him, and assuring me that there should be no want of attendance on either of their parts. 'As for myself,' said Butler, 'I shall have but little inclination to sleep while my poor master continues in any danger; and as for the surgeon, I will take care that he shall wake whenever there is the slightest necessity for his assistance.' So saying, he gave a significant look, as if he should be angry with the gentleman in case of any neglect, and marched off to the housekeeper for some old linen to cut up in bandages. You desired me, at the conclusion of your letter, to inform you, whether there is any other visitor at the Hall. It is with pleasure I can acquaint you that there is not. The morning after your departure, messengers were sent to every body invited,

but myself, to let them know that an unexpected circumstance had happened, which must delay the wedding for some time; but that they should receive early intelligence against the day of celebration. And now, my dearest Louisa, let me again insist that you will bear up with all your fortitude against the hand of adversity. Fortune, believe me, will yet wear a propitious countenance, and we shall all experience a degree of happiness in proportion to the severity of our present distress. Your mother, my sweet girl, on her reverend knees, with streaming eyes and uplifted hands, is this moment blessing you; such a woman's prayers to the Throne of Mercy must be effectual. Providence looks with delight upon all parental supplications; but where a parent is peculiarly distinguished for every virtue, the petition is sanctified into a kind of claim, and is no sooner pronounced than rewarded. Good night, sister of my soul, my ever amiable Louisa! By the next post you shall hear from me again, and I hope infinitely more to your satisfaction.

HARRIOT BEAUCLERK.

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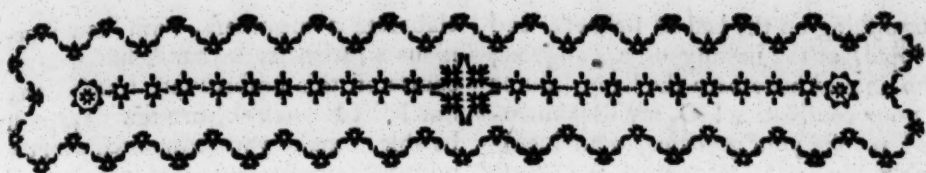
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THE
HISTORY
OF
LOUISA MILDMAY.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

LETTER I.

MISS MILDMAY TO HER MOTHER.



IF I have yet delayed paying my humblest duty to my ever-revered mamma; if I have yet denied myself the unspeakable satisfaction of approaching her by letter; it was neither from a want of the deepest respect, nor the strongest inclination. But, alas! covered with confusion and dishonour, sinking beneath a consciousness of my guilt, and knowing myself utterly unworthy of her smallest consideration, I wanted courage to address her; and even blushed at my presumption, when I supposed it might be possible for her to remember a miserable wretch like me, with any distant traces of pity or affection. And, O my mamma! did you really, on your reverend knees, condescend to beg a blessing for your unfortunate daughter; did you really, with streaming eyes, implore the Throne of Mercy in my favour, and extend your benignant hands to pluck down comfort on my head! Could you pray for the restoration of her peace, who has so barbarously destroyed your happiness, and wish a length of prosperous years to an unnatural monster, whose infamy has shortened your own date of days, and black-

ened the little remnant with affliction and disgrace! Oh, Madam! where shall I hide myself from this excess of goodness! where shall I take refuge from this unbounded amplitude of generosity! The severity of reproach I could have borne, because it is deserved; and I could have withstood the shock of indignation, because it is merited: but this astonishing tenderness is insupportable—it overcomes, it destroys me—and at this moment I am forced to make a full pause, being unable to bear up against the conflict of my own heart, which is no less torn by the keenness of my gratitude, than tortured by the pungency of my remorse.

A few drops of hartshorn having somewhat relieved a faintingness that came over me just then, I now endeavour to resume my letter, though totally at a loss in what manner to proceed: for, alas! my dear mamma, can I possibly mention any subject that will not aggravate the nature of my guilt, and add to the greatness of your affliction? If I ask after my ever-honoured father, the pangs with which I have filled his venerable bosom immediately occur; if I mention the best beloved and noblest of brothers, I find him weltering in blood on my account; and if I even address myself to you, who have treated me with such an infinite degree of unexampled generosity, do I not find you languish-

languishing on the bed of sickness, and drooping at the infamy of a daughter, who should have been the happy source of your consolation! O, my dear mamma! revoke your gracious, your inestimable blessing! Renounce me, curse me, and detest me! for I am detestable in my own eyes, and am ready to commit some instant act of desperation, when I recollect what ruin I have brought upon you all. What a dreadful return have I made for all your unbounded tenderness and affection! Yet, Madam, presumptuous as it must be in me to name either you, my father, or my brother, after what has past, still I must take the liberty of offering up my prayers for the recovery of your peace; still must I pray for the re-establishment of my brother's health, who is so great an ornament to the family! If the goodness of that God, who sees into the bottom of my afflictions, would be pleased to restore him, and to take me speedily out of the world, I should hope it was yet possible for you to be happy together, notwithstanding the misconduct of a guilty wretch, who is now so just an object of your contempt and detestation.

The good Lady Haverham, ever since my arrival in town, has been a constant visitor at Mrs. Darnel's, and tries by every means in her power to alleviate the poignancy of my distress. She laments the behaviour of her brother with the sincerest concern, and has shewn me some letters from him, which give me reason to think he is very sorry for it himself, and is desirous of taking every possible step to effect a reconciliation; but that, Madam, is a matter not to be thought of now. He has shewn himself unworthy of being a son to you and my papa; and, for any thing that should depend on my determination, could I gain the world by a union with him, or, what is more, could I recover my lost peace of mind, I should spurn him without hesitation, and think it an increase of my present infamy to retain him a moment in my remembrance. No, Madam, though I have disgraced my family by the madness of one guilty moment, my mind is yet incapable of a premeditated baseness, and would scorn to vow duty and obedience, where it cannot look without an equal mixture of abhorrence and contempt. You do not know, my dear mamma, how very scandalous a part he has acted! you do not know with how

elaborate a meanness, with how ingenious a littleness, he has behaved in the course of this unfortunate transaction; but Miss Beauclerk, in a few days, will be able to make you acquainted with the minutest circumstance. I am writing out the whole melancholy story, at her request; and I know it will give your generous bosom some satisfaction to find, that though I am guilty, I have not by any subsequent action rendered myself despicable.

Lady Haverham, Madam, was this moment here; she came to me in an absolute state of distraction, so that it was a full hour before Mrs. Darnel and I could restore her to any tolerable share of tranquillity. She had a letter in her hand directed to Mr. Melmoth, of whom you heard her brother speak so very highly when he was down in the country. This letter, it seems, was a circumstantial account of the unhappy quarrel between my brother and Sir Robert; from which we learn, that the worthless man was coming after me in a great hurry to London, to throw himself at my feet, and to implore my forgiveness for his barbarous behaviour. O that my brother had not seen him at Reading! his life had then been entirely out of danger; and I should have had the pleasure at least of mortifying his cruel antagonist with a repulse.

The countess, when she came a little to herself, entered into a long conversation with me about the impropriety of refusing her brother, since he was now brought to so happy a conviction of his errors, and was attached to me still with so unabating an ardency of affection. 'I am sure, my dear Louisa,' argued she, 'notwithstanding you have very great cause for being offended with him, you have not yet erased him from your heart; and it would of consequence be punishing yourself, not to think of forgiving him in the end.' I begged, at last, that her ladyship would say no more on the subject; that it pained me excessively, and that I could never hear her brother's name without reflecting on my own disgrace, and the general dishonour of our family: she then obligingly waved the discourse; but said, that she and Mr. Melmoth were to set off for Mildmay Hall in the morning, and that she hoped to find you and my papa more propitious to her entreaties, than what the justice of my resentment would

would at present suffer me to be: I then only said, that I had disoblged my papa and mamma too much not to wish for some opportunity of making an atonement; but that the circumstance she hinted at was a method which I was pretty sure would not meet with their approbation: however, she left me, after making some professions of a nature so extremely generous, yet delicate, that I could not help lamenting, after her departure, to find so very worthless a man as her brother engrossed so great a share of her affection. For my own part, I once loved him, once tenderly loved him! But why do I torture my recollection with his name? His baseness has cured me of that passion, and I am now alive to nothing but the sense of my dishonour, and the afflictions of my family.

That these afflictions may be speedily removed, my dearest mamma, is my incessant prayer. Life has now no other charm but the hope of seeing your happiness, the happiness of my papa, and the happiness of my brother, re-established: could I once see these desirable events, I should sink contented into my grave; for, though I shall never know a moment's peace in this world, I shall not enter upon the next with any satisfaction, if I have but the smallest cause to think that you remember me with regret. Do not, therefore, my ever to be revered mamma, suffer yourself to feel any uneasiness on my account. Do not let the recollection of a guilty creature like me prey upon your health, and render the family misfortune irreparable. My dear brother, Madam, deserves all your tenderness; and, could a union be brought about between him and my amiable Miss Beauclerk, she would supply every thing which I once endeavoured to be, before I was unworthy to be called your dutiful daughter,

LOUISA MILD MAY.

LETTER II.

MR. MELMOTH TO SIR ROBERT HAROLD.

DEAR HAROLD,

YOU are certainly one of the happiest fellows in the world: every thing is in a fair way of being adjusted

to your wishes; and, before the end of six weeks, I am in hopes to give you joy on your marriage with the amiable Miss Mildmay.

The moment I received your last letter, I went to Lady Haversham with it; and you may easily judge how much that excellent woman was affected at the contents. Tremblingly attentive to your safety, it was with the greatest difficulty she could go through your account of the duel; and generously sensible to the distresses of the Mildmay family, she felt very severely for the misfortune of the colonel. 'Oh, Mr. Melmoth!' cried she, 'what must poor Louisa suffer, what must the good Mrs. Mildmay suffer, on this shocking occasion! My brother, conscious of his guilt, should have borne every thing; and yet, upon the whole, he has acted with more temper than I expected. See, Sir,' continued she, 'how wide, how general a ruin may be occasioned by one bad action! Did young fellows consider what a number of evils may possibly spring from the commission of a single crime, a moment's recollection would be sufficient to deter them from their most favourite pursuits; but, alas! totally regardless of consequences in the progress of their licentious designs, they think the young lady is the only person to be injured, without considering that there is a mother to die at her destruction, and a father or a brother to madden at her disgrace.'

After Lady Haversham had given way for some time to her emotion, I asked her if it would not be the most prudent step that could be taken, for her ladyship to set out instantly to Mildmay Hall with your letter in her hand, and fairly shew the father and mother how little you were to be blamed in your rencounter with the colonel. I observed, that, notwithstanding their resentment against you, they had every reason to treat her with the most unrestrained affection; and I offered my service as an escorte, if she imagined I could accompany her with any degree of propriety. The motion met her approbation, and she accepted of my offer with great satisfaction; saying that, as Miss Mildmay's misfortune could not possibly remain a secret, the presence of a man so intimate with your family could by no means be indelicate. She,

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however, put off the expedition till the morning, being first of all desirous to see Louisa, whom she had not visited that day. And here I must inform you, Harold, that your sister has bought a very elegant chariot, and settled matters just as you could wish with Mrs. Darnel. When Lady Haversham came to that part of your letter which mentions such a provision, it was too much for her; she laid the paper down, and bursting into a flood of tears, exclaimed, 'Why, this is well thought of, Mr. Melmoth; there is soul in this! What pity it is that he will not be uniformly good, and take as much pains to avoid the commission of an injury as he manifests inclination to repair it!' But, to business.

Yesterday morning we set out in a chariot and six for Mildmay Hall, and arrived there about two o'clock, quite surprizing Mr. and Mrs. Mildmay, as you may naturally imagine, by our unexpected appearance. The old gentleman at first carried matters very high, and seemed to think himself under a necessity of keeping a prodigious distance; but Lady Haversham, who has a degree of consideration that equals her benignity, kindly made allowances for his behaviour; and, seizing him by the arm with all that candour of cordiality which generally disarms an ill-grounded resentment, begged of him to consider her as a faithful friend to his family, who deeply partook in his misfortunes, though these misfortunes were unhappily created by the profligacy of her brother. 'My dear Mr. Mildmay,' expostulated the admirable woman, 'I am almost as much to be pitied as yourself: you know how much my heart was in an alliance with your house, and you also know how tender a friendship I ever entertained for the amiable Louisa; do not, therefore, instead of giving me consolation, add ungenerously to my distress, but consider me as a person deeply sensible of all your wrongs, and warmly animated with all your resentments. The author of the present calamity is my brother; but I am sure you cannot think me the sister of his crime, nor imagine that, because I am allied to him in blood, I must likewise be allied to the guilty part of his character. Look at me, I beseech you, with complacency;

and tell me that my presence is not unwelcome in the country.'

This address there was no possibility of resisting. Mr. Mildmay's heart was melted; and, in spite of all his pride, he took hold of her hand with an air of the greatest respect, held it to his lips, and endeavoured to make an apology. A rising flood of grief, however, choked the passage of his words; he broke into a sob of inexpressible affliction, and hastily retired out of the room. You know, Harold, how readily the mother, as you call it, comes into my eyes; you know, besides, that I am twenty good years older than you, and have been once a father. I could not, therefore, stand the excess of poor Mr. Mildmay's emotion: my handkerchief was out in an instant; and, notwithstanding my utmost efforts to suppress my concern, I blubbered so heartily as to be under a necessity of retiring also, unacquainted as I was with the house, and ridiculous as I must have made myself to the servants. As to Mrs. Mildmay, nothing can be more tender or affecting than her reception of your sister. The two ladies, at their first meeting, remained clasped for some moments in each other's arms, each unable to speak a syllable, and both giving a very copious freedom to their tears.

When we had all a little recovered ourselves, and taken a dish of chocolate, Lady Haversham, with her usual delicacy, began to enter on the business of her journey; lamenting the colonel's wound, in terms the most friendly, and hoping that the unfortunate affair at Reading would not prevent the possibility of a reconciliation between the two families: she then set forth your extreme contrition for the part you had acted by Louisa; and insinuated that she had a letter from you in her pocket, which, if Mr. Mildmay would take the trouble of reading, she was certain would, in some measure, lessen the severity of his present indignation. Mr. Mildmay upon this took fire; swearing, with great vehemence, that, so far from consenting to a reconciliation, he never would enjoy a moment's peace of mind till you were sacrificed to his vengeance; and that, if he but knew where you were then concealed, he would himself, old as he was, call you to an instant account for murdering the reputation of his family.

This

This was a folly of passion which we naturally expected, and therefore did not once interrupt him, till it was entirely exhausted. Lady Haverham then resumed the subject, and begged of him to consider, that she was now talking as much for the sake of his happiness, as for the happiness of her brother. 'Indeed, my dear Mr. Mildmay,' continued she, 'if I was not sensible that the present calamity, under which we all labour, requires great allowances, I should be apt to think you almost as culpable as my brother himself. Does it follow, because he has grossly injured the honour of your house, that you yourself should do it still greater injuries? or can it admit of a moment's debate, which is the most proper course to follow, that which will recover the tranquillity of your family, or that which will expose it to an additional distress?

'If calling my brother to an account for his misbehaviour could be attended with any advantages, I should not wonder so greatly at your resentment; but when to do that, as has been already unhappily the case, the safety of a dear and deserving son must be hazarded; and when, even if he should kill his antagonist, he must forfeit his own life to the violated laws of his country: I say, when these things are considered, and when it is moreover recollected, that though the lenity of the laws should spare the life of your son, it can by no means restore your peace, I am in hopes that your own good sense will induce you to abate the warmth of your indignation, and that you will prefer a certain felicity to a precarious revenge. Justice, you see, by the colonel's unfortunate wound, may sometimes be unattended with success; and should you still prosecute a quarrel with a man who desires, who supplicates, who implores to make every reparation that can be made, the world will think your resentment carried to an unreasonable length, and be apt even to rejoice should you meet with any new calamity.

'To the arguments which I have already offered, my dear Mr. Mildmay, I have another very forcible plea to add, which I am sure must operate on your tenderness as a husband, and upon your justice as a man. Turn,

'Sir, to this venerable, this excellent woman, the companion of your youth, the partner of your sorrows, the possessor of your heart; see where she is, sinking under the sternness of your resolution, and bleeding with an apprehension of future misfortunes, as well as with a sensibility of the present distress. She, Sir, has a mother's claim in the son, whose life you are so willing to expose. Do not drive her into absolute distraction. Her anguish is already excessive, and her death must be inevitable, if you think of washing away her daughter's stain with nothing but the blood of her son. On my knees, therefore, Mr. Mildmay,' and down the wonderful woman dropped, 'let me beg of you to think of a reconciliation. My brother is deeply wounded by the consciousness of his own guilt; and will, I am certain, from motives of gratitude, as well as affection, make a good son, and a deserving husband. Do not, my dear Mr. Mildmay, because one affliction has interrupted your happiness, rashly devote yourself to wretchedness for life; but rather seize the best means of dispelling the cloud which at present overcasts your peace, and endeavour at recovering the genial sunshine of that tranquillity which has been so recently and so fatally lost.'

Mr. Mildmay (who all the time of your sister's kneeling, in vain attempted to raise her up) seemed greatly struck with what she said; but, though his reason was convinced, his pride nevertheless held an obstinate struggle, and he several times attempted to quit the room. Lady Haverham and I as often prevented him from going out: we prevailed upon him with difficulty to hear the principal part of your letter read; and Mrs. Mildmay herself kneeling to him, and in very pathetic terms requesting him to oblige Lady Haverham, he was at last overcome, and consented that you might be sent for as soon as we pleased, desiring only that the ceremony might be delayed till the recovery of the colonel.

When we had thus settled the material affair, our conversation naturally turned upon the colonel's case, and the abilities of his attendants. Mr. Mildmay said, that though the wound at first appeared extremely dangerous, as

it was very near the groin, nevertheless the surgeons now told him, that there was but little doubt of a fine cure, provided he escaped a fever. 'And this,' said the old gentleman, 'I am no way uneasy about, as the weather is very cold, and his pulse so very temperate: but,' added he, 'suppose you go and see him; there is nobody with him but Miss Beauclerk, and he had so fine a morning's sleep, that we shall not in the least fatigue him with our company.' We accordingly went, and were received, as I expected, with great coldness, though with great civility; the sight of people so very near to you, naturally hurting that impatience which we all labour under where we have received any thing which looks like a disgrace. Lady Haversham, however, went up to him as if she had been his sister, and expressed her concern for the cause of his misfortune, with so unaffected an air of cordiality as reconciled him a little to his visitors. We then acquainted him with the business of our journey, talked matters over again, and read all your letter but that part where the provision for his sister is mentioned. He was extremely attentive to your account of the duel, and begged more than once to hear a repetition of some particular passages. When I had done, he paused a little, and said you were very exact in the relation; and that, had he imagined you were actuated by a sincere concern for your indiscretion, and were really going up to town with a view of entreating Louisa's forgiveness, he would not have been so rash. 'But,' said he, 'my heart was in the match; and to find every thing broken off while I was flattering my imagination with the happiness my family was to possess; to find the rupture also so dishonourable to us; and to think that a sister, who was my principal pride, should be guilty of such a crime; made me absolutely mad; so that I almost wonder how I refrained from shooting Sir Robert through the head before I even offered him the choice of a pistol.'

Notwithstanding the colonel's seeming frankness, I could easily see he was secretly dissatisfied that he had not been consulted by his father in the conclusion of our accommodation. When the old gentleman told him what he had con-

sented to, he was extremely grave, and observed, that to be sure it was better to settle matters any how, than to think of going farther with family resentments. The tone and look with which he delivered this were visibly farcical; and I could, however, readily perceive he somewhat disconcerted his father. We took no notice of the expression, however; Lady Haversham thinking with me, that those may be allowed to complain a little who feel a great deal. Dinner being ready by this time, we took our leave of the colonel, and sat down in a very sociable manner to a very good repast. Your sister was all life; and Mrs. Mildmay, who has been a very fine woman, was animated with a cheerfulness that really filled me with pleasure; as, from the character Lady Haversham gave me of her worth, I could not but share very sensibly in her afflictions.

In short, we were all extremely happy but Miss Beauclerk. This young lady, who ought to be the gayest person in company, was remarkably thoughtful and reserved; she scarcely touched a morsel of any thing, and even more than once let a sigh escape her pretty audibly: she is a very fine girl indeed, Harold; and, if she is but half as good as she is handsome, it would be ten thousand pities that any thing should give her the least uneasiness. You cannot conceive how excessively I am taken with her; there is so much real good sense, so much genuine delicacy, and so much true benevolence, in every word and action, that was it possible for me ever to marry a second time, or possible for her to look on such an old fellow, I really believe she would be the woman in the world whom I should first think of—but what have I to do with the sex! In my youth I lost the woman of my heart! When I last saw her she was just such another young creature as this Miss Beauclerk; all beauty and beneficence, all sensibility and love: Miss Beauclerk has in fact her very form, her very face, the same irresistible sweetness of voice and elegance of manner which once distinguished my Nancy; and which, though long since buried in the grave, have been continually present to my imagination. Be good-natured, Harold, and bear with me a little on this tender subject. You know I seldom break out, and therefore may
now

now and then be entitled to a little indulgence, especially as I am always so ready to put up with your everlasting impertinence.

The ladies retiring a little after dinner, and leaving Mr. Mildmay and me to chat over a bottle of Burgundy, I took the liberty to make some enquiry about Miss Beauclerk, assuring the old gentleman that I was strongly prepossessed in her favour. 'Why, truly, Mr. Melmoth,' returned he, 'I do not know a sweeter, better-tempered girl, in the world, than this young lady: my Louisa and she contracted an intimacy at the boarding-school, when they were both very young, and have ever since been remarkably distinguished for the closeness of their friendship; the one never knowing a joy or a sorrow in which the other did not immediately enhance the satisfaction, or mitigate the distress. I am sure, in the late unhappy affair, my daughter's misfortune affected Miss Beauclerk as closely, as if Louisa had actually been her sister. During the time of her being here, she has applied herself with such assiduity to comfort and take care of my poor wife, that I consider her as a principal instrument in Mrs. Mildmay's preservation.—Her mother, Sir, lost her husband while Harriot was yet an infant at the breast; he died, it seems, in the East Indies, and left the good lady in such very slender circumstances, that, had not a relation of her own, who died also about the same time, left her a fortune of 20,000*l.* in the funds, she must have gone into some little way of business for the maintenance of herself and her daughter. Upon the interest of this sum she keeps a carriage, and has a most delightful retirement about thirty miles off. What is extremely remarkable is, that, though she was not much above twenty when her husband died, and when she came into possession of this fortune, yet so far from acting like the generality of women, and listening to the addresses of every coxcomb who might have designs either upon her person or her purse, she retired immediately from London to the spot I have been speaking of, and there continued ever since, confining her visits within a very narrow circle, and dedicating her attention to the education of her daughter.

'Within a mile of her house my Louisa was at school when a child; and the intimacy between the little-ones naturally creating an acquaintance between the parents, Mrs. Beauclerk and our family have been upon the most unreserved footing of friendship these sixteen years; and, I dare say, shall continue in friendship till the end of our lives, as there is but one circumstance which can possibly disturb the harmony of our correspondence.'

As it would have been extremely rude in a stranger to ask what this circumstance was, I did not interrupt Mr. Mildmay; nevertheless, I was lucky enough, in the natural communicativeness of his temper, to have my curiosity gratified: his heart was now open, and he considered me as a good-natured friendly man, who might be trusted with a secret; drawing his chair therefore closer to mine, and lowering his voice, he proceeded to unbosom himself, to the following purport.

'You must know, Mr. Melmoth, that, during the intimacy between Mrs. Beauclerk's family and mine, I have discovered that my son entertains very favourable sentiments of her daughter; and, between ourselves, I can see plainly enough, that her daughter is no way disinclined to my son. I have been a young fellow myself, Mr. Melmoth; and, in my time—you understand me—but that is nothing to the purpose. As I was saying, this mutual good opinion between Harry and Miss Beauclerk is a thing which gives me no little uneasiness. The young lady, to be sure, possesses a very high place in my esteem, and I do not know a woman in the kingdom whom I should be better pleased to have for a daughter; but the misfortune is, she does not carry sufficient weight of metal, and I have some family views in my head, which, though I am pretty well in the world, require a considerable addition of fortune. My house, Mr. Melmoth, is a very ancient one; there have been more than two peerages in it, and I have myself some expectation of a title. Now, Sir, as the support of such a dignity cannot allow me to marry my son to a woman of little fortune, on this account I am greatly concerned that any secret correspondence should be carried on between him and Miss Beauclerk. I should

' should be very sorry to oppose his inclinations, or to wound her sensibility; but you know the raising of one's family is a very essential point, and that, ridiculous as a coronet may appear to some people, it is nevertheless entitled to privileges which are far from being disagreeable. This is not all; a noble lord in the neighbourhood, who is able to give his daughter a prodigious sum of money, has lately intimated a desire of uniting his family with mine; and I think so very well of the affair, that I mentioned it yesterday to my son, when I found him launching out into some passionate encomiums on Miss Beauclerk.'—Mr. Mildmay pausing in this place, I could not help observing, that, though the plan which was thus laid down for the aggrandizement of his family, might in itself be extremely right, nevertheless, if his son entertained a cordial affection for the young lady, the possession of her hand might be more conducive to his happiness than the possession of a title; and that therefore it might be difficult to make him sacrifice the interest of his heart even to gratify the laudible ambition of his father. But the old gentleman stopped me short, by declaring he believed the colonel would do any thing to oblige him. ' However,' said he, ' if I should be unhappily disappointed of his obedience in the matter we have been talking of, I know how to punish his obstinacy when I come to dispose of my fortune.' Here our conversation ended, for the ladies coming in, we were obliged to talk of something else; though I should have told you, that Mr. Mildmay more than once insinuated a fear, that his lady secretly approved of the passion subsisting between Miss Beauclerk and the colonel.

I could moralize in this place, Sir Robert, on the preposterous behaviour of those fathers who are willing to give their children every thing but happiness. Reflections of this nature, however, are too common to be useful; and it would be just as new to tell you, that the parts of a day consist of twenty-four hours, as to tell you that the very fondness of such fathers is the most insupportable of all tyrannies. Poor Miss Beauclerk! and is the tawdry gewgaw of a coronet to be put in competition with the charms of exalted virtue, elevated sense,

and sweetness ineffable! But love would be too exquisite an enjoyment, Harold; had not Providence wisely thrown these bars in our way, and tempered the inexpressible raptures which it bestows with some occasional mixtures of infelicity.

Lady Havertham just now called me aside, and hinted that she had spoken to Mrs. Mildmay relative to some expressions which Louisa had dropped in your sister's last interview with her, indicating the most positive determination of never seeing you more. Mrs. Mildmay is to write to her on this subject, and therefore she can but little doubt of Louisa's altering her determination: the resolution of her family in your favour was the principal point to gain; and since we could work upon their pride, there can be no doubt of influencing her sensibility. A woman, Harold, can forgive every thing where she really loves: the ladies have a softness about them which turns even contempt into kindness, and gives the tenderness of their hearts a constant superiority over the goodness of their understandings. I should be sorry, however, that all coxcombs were sensible of this truth; as we have already but too many fools among the fair who are desirous of stamping their weakness with the immediate image of destiny, and solicitous to call that an absolute decree of Fate, which arises from their own apparent want of resolution.

I have been this moment at a consultation of Colonel Mildmay's surgeons, and have the very great pleasure of informing you that he is entirely out of danger. You may therefore, by the next Helvoetsluys packet, make a trip to Harwich, since at the utmost it cannot be above twelve hours from Rotterdam to Helvoet. If you should stop at the Hague, pray call at Fitzpatrick's, in the Hoogstraet; who is as modest as sensible, and as well behaved a man, as I ever saw at the head of a tavern; and who, without mentioning any body's name, will treat you with the utmost civility. If you know the man already, my character will be needless; if you do not, you will find a very good house, and so far be obliged to me for this accommodation.

As we have done our business at Mildmay Hall, your sister and I shall set out for London, in order to wait upon Louisa, and acquaint her with the determination

nation of her father. Mrs. Mildmay has a letter to send by us to her daughter, which will put a finishing hand to the reconciliation; so that, Bob, you may look upon the whole affair as concluded to your wish: yet it is ten to one, now happiness is again within your reach, but you will strive to start difficulties, and endeavour to destroy all that Lady Havertham and I have been labouring to bring about with such an unremitting degree of sedulity.

Take care, however, dear Harold, how you act at this time; and do not idly play the prodigal with your own happiness. Youth can never excuse a bad action, though it may extenuate the indiscretion of a foolish one; and the man who is twice guilty of the same crime, is in much more danger of making himself abhorred, than in rendering others wretched or contemptible: take the hint, therefore, Bob, and believe me, with the utmost cordiality, your real friend,

C. MELMOTH.

LETTER III.

MR. MELMOTH, IN CONTINUATION,
TO SIR ROBERT HAROLD.

DEAR HAROLD,

IF you have not yet set out from Rotterdam, you may as well continue where you are, or go to any other part of the continent which is best adapted to your inclination: England is not a place which I would have you return to yet a while, if you really love Miss Mildmay, and would be concerned to find her actually allied to infamy and prostitution.

Your sister and I arrived in town this morning; and, unable to contain the satisfaction with which our bosoms naturally swelled at your approaching felicity, we immediately drove to Louisa's, with a view of dispelling her unhappiness, by acquainting her with the fortunate reconciliation effected between her and her family. But judge our astonishment, when, instead of meeting with her, Mrs. Darnel came down stairs with an air of the utmost affliction, and informed us that Miss Mildmay had eloped in a post-chaise and six, with a gentleman richly dressed, the preced-

ing evening. 'Having no authority to watch her motions,' said Mrs. Darnel, 'and imagining from her specious air of penitence, if I even had, that every attention of that nature would be utterly unnecessary, I went to hear a lecture at our parish church after tea, never once dreaming that during my absence she would think of running away from a house into which she had entered a voluntary visitor, and in which there was no likelihood of her receiving the smallest disgust. You may, however, easily guess my consternation, when my maid Jenny, the moment I came home, ran up and informed me that Miss Mildmay had gone off with a gentleman in a post-chaise. I naturally concluded that, had it been any relation, I should have received some notice of her intended departure; and therefore, as she went away in so unaccountable a manner, I as naturally ascribed her flight to some preconcerted design; especially as Jenny informed me, that a gentleman in brown and gold had for two or three nights been seen to hang about the house, and to peep in at the windows, with a degree of breeding much below the elegance of his appearance. Notwithstanding these unpromising accounts, I nevertheless sat up till four o'clock, rather hoping than expecting the unfortunate young lady's return: but, alas! I might have sat up till this moment, without reaping the least advantage from my anxiety or my fatigue; she never once approached the house, and which way she has gone I am by no means able to conjecture.'

And this, Sir Robert, is the end of all our expectations. For my own part, strenuously solicitous as I was but a few hours ago in her favour, I now sincerely congratulate with you on your fortunate escape; I now begin to think you were right in rejecting her from the first, and am perfectly satisfied that the error, which I thought the effect of her partiality for you, was nothing more than the result of her own constitution. Lady Havertham, however, will not subscribe to my opinion of her levity, though she knows not any cause to which her elopement can be so probably attributed. Nevertheless, she thinks all enquiry after her needless; and almost wishes that she had not taken the journey

ney into Oxfordshire. 'For this new disappointment, Mr. Melmoth,' says she, 'will come with additional weight upon her family; and if it does not entirely kill the poor mother, it will certainly drive her distracted.'

Mrs. Darnel, who appears to be a decent, well-behaved woman, notwithstanding your suspicions, is to send down an account of Louisa's elopement to Mildmay Hall. What consequences it may produce there I know not; but of this I am certain, that you have every reason in nature to be happy in the timely discovery of her levity. Had such a discovery been made after your marriage with her, I suppose the result would have been her immediate death, and your certain execution: you would have sacrificed her instantly to your fury, and your life would have been the penalty of your rashness. Return thanks, therefore, to Providence, for having such a fortunate escape, and do not meanly regret the loss of a woman whom you know to be guilty, when you could so readily give her up at a time that you thought her innocence in a manner unquestionable. But you see, Harold, that innocence, like contrition, may be easily affected; and that those may seem the most strenuous votaries of virtue, who are in fact the least unhappy at it's loss.

If any thing new should occur before you think of returning home, you need not doubt of my readiness to communicate it. Lady Haversham is extremely affected with Louisa's behaviour, but attempts very little, if any thing, in her defence; she sends her best wishes to you by this letter, and desires me to assure you, that she is as much your affectionate sister, as I am your faithful friend,

C. MELMOTH.

LETTER IV.

MISS HARRIOT BEAUCLERK TO
HER MOTHER.

DEAR MAMMA,

A Distress of a more piercing nature than ever has fallen upon this unhappy family. You will scarcely conceive, and I have scarcely power to inform you, that my wretched friend

Miss Mildmay, while Lady Haversham was down here, as I told you in my last letter, settling ever thing to our wishes, and restoring every body to peace, eloped from Mrs. Darnel's, in London, with a strange gentleman, in a chariot and six, while her cousin was at church; and where she is gone there is no likelihood of discovering. Mrs. Darnel's account of this affair reached us this morning; and from the pain which I know your own worthy heart will feel on this melancholy occasion, you may easily imagine what an effect it had on her poor father and mother, upon her brother, and myself. I would, if possible, have kept it from the colonel, as I thought the knowledge of so fatal an accident might materially retard his recovery. But Mr. Mildmay's rage was too violent, and the venerable lady's anguish too excessive, to admit of such a salutary secrecy; so that, in less than five minutes, he was made acquainted with the minutest circumstances; and the agitation of his mind has been so prodigious ever since, that his physicians begin to be apprehensive about the consequences.

Indeed, my dear mamma, I am inexpressibly wretched from the part which I am to act in the general calamity. Every body turns to me for consolation, when my own bosom is torn with a thousand distresses, and expects that I should be able to administer comfort, when I am equally, if not more miserable myself. You, my dearest mamma, must soothe my afflictions: you must enable me, by the magnanimity of your example, and the wisdom of your advice, to bear up against this unexpected stroke of misfortune, which now falls on me with an aggravated heaviness, as it comes in the hour of my utmost security, and invades me in the most unsuspecting moment of my hopes. I was feasting my imagination, Madam, with numberless prospects of future felicity, and preparing my heart for nothing but happiness and you; when, alas! the golden scene is instantly ravished from my eyes, and the whole void as instantly filled up with disappointment and despair!

When I consider this unaccountable step of Louisa's, I am lost in perplexity and doubt. Mrs. Darnel's letter acquaints us that she went away of her own accord; that she was not carried off by

by force, but that she absolutely eloped; and the maid even describes the gentleman with whom she went, as a tall handsome man, dressed in browh, richly laced with gold; she says also, that he was a very fair man, and wore a bob-wig. All this is mighty odd. I have known her from her infancy up; have shared every secret of her heart, and never conceived that she entertained the least affection for any body but Sir Robert Harold. Him it cannot be, as by Mr. Melmoth's account he set out for Holland the moment after the unhappy duel between him and the colonel; and, besides, he has a complexion remarkably black, and wears his own hair. When I put all these things together, my dear mamma, I am astonished. Louisa would hardly go off with a man for whom she felt no affection; and the whole tenor of her life has been so generously frank and open, and so repugnant to every thing like hypocrisy or artifice, that I could stake my existence Sir Robert is the only man for whom she cherished a favourable sentiment. Besides, Madam, if you were to see the letter which she sent her mother, you would be satisfied that, notwithstanding her unhappy lapse with that gentleman, she is infinitely above the appearance of dissimulation. Her error is there acknowledged in such forcible terms, and lamented with such a sense of unextenuating penitence, that her faults almost render her amiable, and the only emotions which we feel are those of pity and admiration.

For these reasons, I am positive my amiable friend can be no way depraved in her principles; yet, on the other hand, Mrs. Darnel is a woman of known sobriety and character; is received among people of the first distinction, in consequence of her good behaviour; and she mentions Louisa's elopement with so positive a degree of certainty, that there can be no possibility of disputing the fact. God grant that this contradiction may be happily reconciled! My own soul is not dearer in my estimation than the happiness of Miss Mildmay; and I do not know that I could be able to survive any instance of her premeditated unworthiness.—Premeditated unworthiness! No, my ever amiable Louisa! you are incapable of a deliberate guilt; and the bare suppo-

sition would be a blasphemy against the purity of our mutual affection. The heart which can question the virtue of a friend till it argues upon absolute conviction, is a traitor to the cause of amity: the most alarming appearance should never shake the confidence of our friendship; and though in every thing else a nice combination of accidents may justify a doubt, yet here we ought never to hesitate upon circumstances, nor to lessen in our regards till conjecture is evidently lost in certainty.

These arguments, my dear mamma, I have repeatedly urged in the present state of things to the good Mrs. Mildmay; but she shakes her head when I want her to reduce the precept into practice; and, while the large drops course one another down her venerable cheeks, she tells me the sentiment sounds prettily enough upon the ear, but is little calculated to convince the understanding. I wish, my dear mamma, you could come over to us; there never was a greater necessity for your supporting presence than now. Mrs. Mildmay seems in a very declining way, and her situation alarms me the more strongly, as she does every think in her power to put on an air of the utmost composure and serenity.

As you, my dear mamma, are one of those excellent women who bring up a daughter rather in a state of respectful familiarity with you, than endeavour to establish an authority by keeping her in a distant degree of abject subjection; as you are generous enough to receive those instances of confidence as a favour, which you can command as a right, and can blend all the tenderness of the parent with all the freedom of the friend; I am enabled to talk to you on a subject which few young women ever care to mention to a mother, though a mother's ear is the properest by much for a business of such importance.

You have often, my dear Madam, kindly hinted your apprehension, that the merits of Colonel Mildmay were making too deep an impression on my heart; and that I should by all means resist every impulse of a tender nature in his favour, as there was but too much reason to apprehend that the disparity of our fortunes would be a material bar to our union, notwithstanding the harmony subsisting so long between

our two families. Your advice, my ever-honoured mamma, I was convinced was perfectly just; nevertheless—but why should I think of concealing any thing from my best friend, from the only person in the world, who by nature and inclination must be the readiest to rejoice at my felicity, or to participate in my distress? Yes, Madam, I must own, in spite of all your judicious precautions, my heart was insensibly engaged, and I loved before I was aware that the colonel had any other place in my affection than what was due to the brother of Louisa. You, Madam, I am sure, must have seen, upon several occasions, what an awkward constraint I have laboured under when I have been in his company. Your penetration could not be eluded, though I then fondly thought nobody could see into my sentiments, and piqued myself upon the address with which I behaved in so very critical a situation.

Indeed, the respectful tenderness with which the colonel all along treated me contributed not a little to raise him in my esteem. Upon a thousand little occasions he gave me proof of his good opinion, though he never made me the most distant tender of his heart; but judging of his sentiments by my own, or possibly believing, because I wished it might be so, that he really saw me with more than a common degree of friendship, I suffered the flame imperceptibly to spread, and was solicitous only of concealing my weakness from his observation: but matters, Madam, have at last come to something of a crisis, and I have the satisfaction of *knowing* that my tenderness is at least returned, whether I am ever blessed with the object of it, or not.

The second day after the colonel's coming down wounded, before he was yet pronounced out of danger, he sent his compliments to me, and begged I would favour him with a visit, as he had something of importance to acquaint me with. The light in which I was considered by every body in the family, joined to the nature of his situation, would have made it affectation to the last degree had I not immediately complied with his request. I therefore went, and the attendants being ordered out of the room, he begged of me to seat myself close to the bed-side; where, taking hold

of my hand, and desiring I would not be offended at what he was going to say, he went on to the following purport.

'The distresses of my mind, and the anguish of my wound, rendering my recovery extremely precarious, I have presumed, Miss Beauclerk, to beg your ear upon a subject, which, though very near my heart, I would not, for particular reasons, enter upon, was there a certainty either that medicine or time could do me any essential benefit. As it is therefore doubtful how long I may be in a capacity of delivering myself intelligibly, I have determined to seize the present opportunity of opening my mind; since, was I to leave the world without telling you how dear you have always been to my soul, my parting moments would be imbittered with an anxiety that must render the natural gloominess of death inconceivably afflicting. Oh, Miss Beauclerk! from the first moment I beheld you, young as we both were, I loved you. Every day, as you rose into perfection, I felt an increase of passion, though I strove to conceal my sentiments very carefully from the world, as I saw but too many difficulties in the way of our union, had I even merit enough to solicit with a likelihood of success. In short, Madam, I found my father's ambition was utterly unfavourable to my hopes; and I saw that you had too much dignity of disposition to come into a family that would look upon your alliance in a disagreeable light, or shew a less regard to the invaluable requisites of beauty and virtue, than to the infinitely meaner circumstances of ancestry and fortune. These, Madam, were the motives of my silence; and silence, however mortifying in my situation, was at least the most prudent part, if it was not the most generous. I have always looked with detestation on those men, who, though they were conscious of some family consideration that must prevent them from accepting the honour of a lady's hand, were nevertheless insolent enough, or cruel enough, to aim at engaging her affections. On these accounts, I say, Madam, had I even reason to think you would have blessed me with a reciprocal esteem, I had avoided the presumption or the baseness

' nefs of a declaration ; ſince, as there
' was no proſpect of leading you into
' any certain ſtate of felicity, it would
' be infamy itſelf to think of plunging
' you into diſtreſs.'

O, mamma ! what a mind has this
man ! Here, however, he was obliged
to reſt himſelf a little, while the only
reply I could make was with my tears.

After a pauſe of ſome moments, he
reſumed the affecting ſubject, and thus
continued his diſcourſe. ' I do not now,
' my ever adorable Miſs Beauclerk,
' meanly intend, by an addreſs to your
' generoſity, to make any intereſt with
' your heart. Your eſteem I ſhould be
' proud of poſſeſſing ; but thus hover-
' ing, as I may ſay, on the verge of
' eternity, I ſhould be ſorry, for your
' own ſake, was I honoured with your
' love. May that, Madam, be reſerved
' for ſome fortunate man, whoſe merits
' are ſufficient to juſtify your choice,
' and whoſe ſituation will not create any
' impediments in the road of your hap-
' pineſs. Had I been deſtined for ſuch
' a bleſſing !—but why do I harrow up
' my own reflection, or wound your
' ſenſibility ? I know the ineffable ſweet-
' neſs of that temper, and have ſeen
' numberleſs occasions where a tale of
' calamity has deluged it in tears.
' From an ungenerous lamentation, I
' ſhall therefore proceed to buſineſs ;
' and if I can but gain your acquieſ-
' cence to a laſt request, the hand of
' Death will lie light upon my brows,
' and I ſhall go out of the world in a
' comparative ſtate of content.'

Oh, my dear mamma ! how I trem-
bled at the ſolemnity, the tendereſs of
his manner—the dangerous extremity
to which I ſaw him reduced ! In ſhort,
as he himſelf phraſed it, very happily, the
diſtreſſes of his mind, and the anguiſh
of his wound, intereſted me ſo much
in his favour, that I never thought of
interrupting him ; but continued one
paſſive hand all the time in his, the
other being employed in holding up my
handkerchief to my eyes, which were by
this time quite red, and ſwollen with
my emotion. After another pauſe to
recover ſtrength he thus went on.

' The request which I have to make,
' my dear Miſs Beauclerk, may, per-
' haps, be inconſiſtent with your very
' refined notions of delicacy ; but con-
' ſider that ſome indulgences are due to
' your friends, and that I am entitled

' to your good wiſhes, though I have no
' claim to your love ; by theſe wiſhes,
' therefore, by the generoſity of your
' temper, by all your regards in this
' world, and by all your hopes in the
' next, I conjure you to oblige me.
' Oh, Harriot ! I would die for you !
' Shew me therefore one little mark of
' eſteem ; and, as a token of your friend-
' ſhip, only accept of this paper : it is
' an inſtrument which has been execut-
' ed above two years ; and, by all that's
' holy, whether you accept of it or not,
' it ſhall never be revoked !'

Oh, good God ! my dear mamma, it
was his will—his will ! Had the uni-
verſe been offered me, I could not touch
it. My ſenſibility now became audible :
I quite ſobbed, yet, ſcarcely knowing
what I did, I diſengaged my hand from
his, and falling down upon my knees
by the bed-ſide, cried out, ' O ſpare
' me, Sir ! ſpare me ! this is too much ;
' indeed it is !' at the ſame time ſink-
ing my face upon the bed-cloaths, whol-
ly unable to look up, as if I was con-
ſcious of ſome manifeſt impropriety.
To be ſure, Madam, it was very wrong
in me to let him ſee how much I was
diſtreſſed. But what could I do ? Con-
ſider his tendereſs for me, and then
think of his melancholy ſituation : in
ſhort, my ever-revered mamma, conſider
alſo that I had ſentiments of a ſofter
nature than gratitude or friendſhip to
occasion my agitation, and then you
will be much more apt to pity than to
condemn it.

The colonel, Madam, ſeemed greatly
affected by my emotion ; and, by endea-
vouring to aſſiſt me up, occaſioned me
to riſe conſiderably ſooner than what I
would have done had he made uſe of
the moſt earneſt entreaties ; for the mo-
ment I found him exerting himſelf to
that purpoſe, I recollected his wound,
and was inſtantly in my former ſitua-
tion, notwithſtanding my cheeks were
viſibly ſtudded over with tears, and
notwithſtanding my perturbation was ſo
exceſſive as to furniſh a man of his fine
ſenſe with ſome reaſonable ſuſpicions of
the cauſe. Be this as it may, he preſſed
my hand to his lips with an air of in-
expreſſible tendereſs ; and, apologizing
for the uneaſineſs which he had given
me, he continued to enforce his request
with ſo much vehemence, and to declare
in ſo poſitive a manner, that he could
never enjoy a moment's peace unleſs I

gratified him in this point, that I told him I would consider the matter a little farther, and give him an answer in two or three days. 'Two or three days, Harriot!' replied he, with a mixture of sorrow and surprize; 'two or three days! Suppose that in this time I should be taken off, your answer then will be a little of the latest, and I shall go out of the world without my principal consolation. The thing and the time require an immediate determination; and my reason for mentioning it to you at all, is to prevent the rashness of your generosity. I know that, should I die without exacting a sacred promise from you to enjoy yourself this last little mark of my affection, you would think it an indispensable obligation to give every thing back to my family. But my family is already too rich for it's own happiness; and, if I am to be removed, will have still less occasion for it's extraordinary opulence. Promise, therefore, Harriot; solemnly promise, in the presence of that God who sees with how aching a sense of tenderness I love you, that you will, according to the true purport of my request, accept of this testament. In it I have not forgot some proper remembrances for my father and mother; and, because I knew you would receive more pleasure on that account, I have not ordered any erasure to be made in an article that relates to the wretched Louisa. Talking, my dear Miss Beauclerk, I find, becomes inconvenient to me. Indulge me, therefore, at once, and consider, that to be generous upon some occasions may be the highest instance of barbarity.'

Whether I was right or wrong, my dear mamma, you must determine; but, unable to resist his solicitations any longer, I took the paper with a reluctant hand; and, in my confusion putting it into my bosom instead of my pocket, the colonel seemed transported at the action, kissed my hand a thousand times, and declared he could now quit the world with content. All the time I was sinking under a load of equal awkwardness and anxiety, till the surgeons happily coming in, gave me an opportunity of retiring, and unlading the fulness of my heart in a fresh shower of tears.

The good Mrs. Mildmay, knowing

that I had been a considerable while in the colonel's apartment, came up to my room; and, finding my eyes extremely red, she threw her kind arms round my neck, and calling me by the tenderest appellations you can conceive; told me she had been long sensible that her son was passionately in love with me, and that she also had been long sensible, notwithstanding my delicate reserve, (so she was pleased to say) that I considered him with an eye of affection. 'But, my sweet girl, my dear Harriot,' continued she, finding me distressed and astonished at this information, 'do not imagine I have seen this mutual regard with any other regret, but my fear that Mr. Mildmay would not be propitious to the happiness of his son: for my own part, I am so convinced of your worth, that the colonel has an additional share in my regard on account of his attachment to you; and, could I but prevail upon his father, I should still have a daughter no less dear in my estimation than the miserable Louisa. But, my love, this family-pride so runs away with my poor Mr. Mildmay's good sense, that I despair of making him sacrifice the suggestions of his vanity to the sentiments of his reason: his mind has been always taken up with an idea of making his children great; and, so he could gain them an empty title, he paid but little consideration to what might secure their felicity.'

And thus, my dear mamma, are matters at present situated; and thus, all the time that I have been supposing my affection for the colonel a secret, this excellent woman has been into the most latent recesses of my heart, and even kindly sympathized with my anxiety. You may be sure, Madam, that, after this excessive goodness had a little emboldened me, I made her acquainted with every circumstance which passed with the colonel, though I scarcely knew how to mention the affair of the will, as I thought she might fancy me on that account an enemy, though an involuntary one, to the interest of her family. But Mrs. Mildmay, Madam, is a counterpart of yourself; she has a soul incapable of listening to any little considerations, and observes the practice of generosity too much in her own conduct not to love it in other people's. As I went on with my story she was gradually

ally affected; her heart laboured, and her eye rose in perfect unison to mine; and, upon the conclusion of my narrative, 'Harriot,' said she, 'the more I know you, the more I wish you for my daughter! My son has pleased me exceedingly by his conduct on this occasion; and I think you would have acted rather below the dignity of your character, had you not condescended to oblige him; but, notwithstanding the little likelihood of present appearances, I have yet a dawn of hope which beams across my bosom, and assures me you shall one day be happy with the colonel. Had the unfortunate Louisa—but why do I afflict myself with recollecting a creature who now has really dishonoured us? Her scandalous elopement, in the very moment of her seeming penitence, argues an uncommon turpitude of sentiment, and shews that her first indiscretion was not so much the consequence of an extravagant tenderness for her lover, as the result of her natural depravity. God will, I hope, however, forgive the unhappy wretch her guilt, and mercifully decline to swell the enormity of her crime, by putting down her death to my account.'

My unhappy Louisa!—You may be sure, my dear mamma, I did what I possibly could to alleviate the distresses of the venerable Mrs. Mildmay, at the same time that I said every thing which could extenuate the seeming misbehaviour of my friend. The good old lady seemed willing to catch at any twig of probability which might keep her hopes entirely from sinking; but, alas! the fatal force of appearances rendering the very strongest quite unequal to the task, she changed the conversation, and asked me if I had any scruple to shew her the colonel's will. I replied, that I could have no scruple to shew her any thing, as I was sensible she could never have a desire that was not founded on the strictest propriety; and therefore immediately produced it from my bosom. 'My dear,' said she, 'you are very good: and yet, be assured I should not make this request on any account, was I not convinced that you wish as cordially as myself that the testator's recovery may prevent the will from being ever carried into execution.'

'Indeed, Madam,' returned I—
'Harriot,' interrupted she, 'let minds

that doubt each other's candour break out into professions of regard, and sentimental exclamations; it is below us, however, my love, to enter into a vindication of our motives, since any argument to prove them just would be tacitly to acknowledge that it was possible for them to be otherwise. We will not, my dearest girl, even wrong the rectitude of our own principles by implication, nor be the first to deny ourselves that merit which has been hitherto granted us by every body else.' So saying, she opened the will, which is very short, containing little more than a general reason for the colonel's appointing me his heir; and leaving a miniature of himself set in diamonds to his mother; his horses, arms, and watch, to his father; his library to Louisa; a diamond ring to yourself; some trifling remembrances to other friends; and his cloaths and about two hundred pounds among the servants.

Short as the will was, my dear mamma, I could scarcely stand the shock of reading it: there is something so awful in a will, you know, even where one's self is not concerned; but when it is made by a person for whom one entertains an esteem, when a partiality is absolutely shewn in one's own favour, and when there is another person by, who is infinitely more entitled to a preference, it must be inexpressibly distressing to us, if we are not wholly divested of sentiment and delicacy. You cannot therefore imagine my confusion, when I found the colonel had left me two thousand pounds in money, the magnificent service of plate which had been his godfather Harley's, and the Buckinghamshire estate, which is seven hundred pounds a year, and which was formerly his great-aunt Ingoldby's. Mrs. Mildmay saw my anxiety, and kindly pitied it; restoring me the paper, and acknowledging she had been to blame in suffering her curiosity to carry her so far. 'But, my dear Harriot,' said she, 'a mother will pay but little attention to decorum in any thing which concerns the conduct of her children.' After this we had a long conversation about the colonel, in which Mrs. Mildmay seemed so highly pleased with his behaviour to me, that I was somewhat re-assured, and had fresh opportunities of admiring the greatness of her generosity. Notwithstanding this, the

the circumstances of the will rendered me excessively awkward, till we were flattered with some certain hopes of the colonel's recovery. From that moment I breathed a freer air, and considered myself as less an interloper in the family. He is now, thank God, in a very fine way, and has borne the fresh shock of his sister's abrupt departure with a much greater share of fortitude than could be expected.

And now, my dear mamma, how do you do? And what do you say to the boldness of your girl, in thus presuming to talk to you upon such a point as the foregoing subject? Do you condemn her of temerity, or approve her for candour? Do you imagine that she has grown forward on your indulgence; or do you think that she has made only a proper use of your tenderness, and treated you with the openness which is doubly your due, from the closeness of your relation, and the greatness of your indulgence? I wish I knew your sentiments; for, as you have always studied to anticipate every desire of mine, I should be a monster indeed, if I hesitated but an instant to comply with your inclinations. The whole family here, my dear mamma, are impatient to see you. Mrs. Mildmay longs, she says, to talk with you about the colonel, and you know who. The old gentleman repeatedly tells me, that the value of a friend is only to be experienced in the day of adversity; and the colonel hopes that nothing at the Hall has given you any cause of disgust. Come to us, then, dear Madam, for your company is greatly wanted, and by none, you may believe, so much as your daughter. The colonel's tenderness oppresses me; the amiable Louisa's fate distracts me; and Mrs. Mildmay's goodness is insupportable. Come, then, Madam, to my rescue! The arms of maternal affection are always fraught with peace; and if they bring comfort in proportion to their benignity, who is so likely to receive the balm of consolation as your ever dutiful and affectionate daughter,

HARRIOT BEAUCLEER.

P. S. When I write to my dear mamma, I never know where to leave off. I should have told you that Butler, a very sensible fellow, who is servant to the colonel, has been sent away to London, to make a minute enquiry at Mrs. Darnel's,

in relation to Louisa. God grant the honest man may succeed; for, if friendship is liable to be attended with such anguish as I feel upon this dear, but unfortunate girl's account, I must, for the future, avoid every acquaintance with the most amiable part of my sex, for fear of being plunged into continual calamities.

LETTER V.

SIR ROBERT HAROLD TO CHARLES MELMOTH, ESQ.

VIENNA, AUGUST 2.

IT is in vain, my dear Melmoth, I find, for your unfortunate friend to continue any longer abroad: the change of country in no manner tends to alleviate the distresses of his bosom, nor erases in the least the form of that amiable wretch, that Miss Mildmay, from his recollection. If possible, she gives him every moment an additional pang; and, till he becomes utterly deprived both of memory and sense, he must feel the sharpest affliction on her account.

In reality, Charles, though it is now twelve months since the infamous flight of that unfortunate girl, I am rather more wretched than ever! She is continually present to my imagination; and I find, in spite of my pride and my reason, that she holds an absolute empire over my heart, and that I must actually cease to live before I can actually cease to love her. Do not despise me, however, my dear Melmoth. I blush for my own baseness, in suffering the abandoned woman even to steal a single instant upon my thoughts; but, alas! the more I would banish her, the more forcibly she returns, and I am distracted with a perpetual round of tenderness and shame, of pity and indignation: wherever I go I am torn with a variety of opposite passions; and, to use the language of poor Sciolto,

All within is anarchy and uproar.

How, Melmoth, when I received your first letter at Rotterdam, did my soul exult in the expectation of being completely happy with Louisa! The most distant insinuation of that delinquency which originally caused all our misfortunes, was then argued down into silence; and the

the universal joy which I thought would flow from a reconciliation, added to the tumultuous tide of transport that swelled about my heart, from a still more natural cause, gave me an absolute foretaste of elysium. But Providence thought proper, by an accident, which I considered at that time as the greatest of all calamities, to snatch me from the smiling destruction, and graciously counteracted the warmth of my wishes, to preserve me from everlasting disgrace. O Melmoth! had I been married to her before this fortunate discovery of her infamy, think what would have been the consequence! To the remotest confine of the world I had pursued her; and, as Othello says,

Had all her hairs been lives, my great
revenge

Had stomach for them all!

In fact, Charles, I should have proceeded upon some immediate act of desperation; and, perhaps, after I had sacrificed her to the justice of my resentment, it is more than probable I had been tempted to lay violent hands on myself.

You see, however, my dear friend, from the conduct of this unhappy wretch, how much reason I had for supposing, that the woman who deviates from the rules of virtue with one man, will have very little scruple to indulge the licentious turn of her disposition with another; you see what reason I had to set Louisa's crime down to the account of genuine constitution, instead of attributing it to the weakness of an extravagant love. But your women of strong passions, Charles, are continually falling in love; every fresh object inspires a fresh desire; and when they have once conquered that exalted delicacy of sentiment, which is the principal bulwark of their honour, they give an unbounded licence to enjoyment, and imagine that, since they have been familiar with one person, there can be no addition to their guilt by an equal familiarity with all. Thus, instead of an endeavour to recover the hallowed paths of innocence, they make a single indiscretion an excuse for the commission of a thousand, and indulge every rising gust of inclination, by arguing themselves into a belief, that it cannot in the least increase the infamy of their characters.

You pleased me extremely by your

repeated accounts of Colonel Mildmay's perfect recovery. Poor fellow, he now sees for what a worthless woman he ventured his life; and those mad-headed puppies that are for resenting the ruin of a sister, who is impatient to be ruined, and who places the principal of all felicities in her absolute destruction, will, I hope, be warned by Louisa's conduct, from hazarding their throats whenever a profligate hussey thinks proper to throw away her reputation. Is it not, however, surprizing, that, in all this time, notwithstanding the most diligent search of the Mildmay house, no account whatsoever can be heard of their delicate daughter? But I suppose she is in some secluded corner of the kingdom, wallowing in the sty of unbounded prostitution, and even entertaining some underbred scoundrel of a keeper with the pangs which her infamous flight has thrust into the bosom of her miserable family. O for some quick, some executing curse, to strike the strumpet and her paramour this moment to the centre, though I was to follow them the next! Perhaps, Charles, she is diverting them with a ludicrous representation of your friend, and laughing with him this moment, at my stupidity in once believing her a woman of virtue; perhaps my manner is mimicked to a circle of intoxicated fox-hunters; and perhaps a whole table of brutal country squires are at this very instant roaring at the seriousness and solemnity of my first declaration. O that I was near her! that I could reach her prostitute heart! By the great God of Heaven, it would give me more pleasure to tear it from her bosom, than to receive the empire of the whole universe; and I am not sure but I would forfeit my hopes of everlasting salvation, if I could but commit a piecemeal murder on her villain, and make him feel but one half, one fiftieth part of that hell, which his possession of her has kindled in this breast, and which is at this moment furiously flaming for revenge!

Yet, Charles, what have I to do with this abandoned woman? What is her infamy to me? I will talk no more of her; I will think no more of her; I will stab her idea to the heart, if it ever rises again to my imagination. I will — alas, my dear Melmoth! I can talk of nothing else; I can think of nothing

nothing else; and base, polluted, prostitute as she is—I will not answer, but that she might yet find it possible to argue me into an opinion of her innocence; and persuade me, even against the sense of my own conviction, into such a belief of her purity as would induce me to forget every thing which is past, and urge me to snatch her again to my bosom with all the passionate phrenzy of a desperate love. O Melmoth! had you ever seen her, had you ever heard her talk! But I will drop the subject, I will speak of something else; and only observe, that the greatest of all curses, is to doat upon the object of our utmost contempt, and to feel an invincible fondness in our hearts for what our reason points out as an everlasting mark of detestation.

I have by this post wrote to my sister, and informed her of my intention to comply immediately with her wishes, and return home: Edwards has orders to prepare every thing for my departure; and, in six weeks, or a couple of months, I flatter myself with a hope of finding you in high spirits and in good health. You, my dear Melmoth, and that exalted woman, Lady Haversham, shall have the direction of my future life. You are people upon whose friendship I can safely rely; and, notwithstanding all the parade which is made about a knowledge of the world, I am not satisfied but that the integrity of our friends is much more essential to our welfare than their knowledge of mankind.—But a truce with philosophical reflections.

What you tell me in relation to my sister's refusal of Lord Winworth does not at all surprize me. A woman of eight and twenty, with a prodigious fortune, a fine person, and such a mind as Lady Haversham's, cannot fail of having a number of admirers. But I am satisfied, deserving as those admirers may be, she will never think of changing her situation. I know Theodosia possesses a delicacy of mind perhaps superior to all the rest of her sex; and am sensible, however she may respect the matrimonial union, that she is no friend to second marriages. She has in confidence repeatedly told me, that a heart which is deserving of regard can admit but of one impression; and that she who can love a second time is utterly unworthy of being ever loved at all. Her notions to some may appear a

little romantick; but I dare say, Charles, they will never lessen her in any body's estimation, whose esteem can be necessary to her peace, or advantageous to her character. This I am sure of, at any rate, that they will excite your admiration as much as they have done that of your ever faithful

ROBERT HAROLD.

LETTER VI.

MISS LOUISA MILD MAY TO MISS
HARRIOT BEAUCLERK.

MAGDALEN - HOUSE,
GOODMAN'S FIELDS.

AND have I at last the unspeakable happiness of writing once more to my dear Harriot? Does she still acknowledge me for her friend? or does she join in the general obloquy which the whole world must naturally throw upon a mysterious absence of above eleven months, at a time too that the most criminal levity of conduct had banished me from the protecting arms of parental affection, and cast me out in the full face of the whole universe, as a disgrace to my sex, and a scandal to my family? O Harriot! it will be no more than what I expect, if you should both despise and detest me; yet, when my story, my melancholy story, comes to be related; when you find how basely, how cruelly I have been betrayed; I know your tender heart will bleed at what I have suffered, and I know also that the generosity of your disposition will be sensibly affected, if during a period in which I have been most entitled to your pity, I have been materially lessened in your esteem. To begin then at once. Know that the specious, the sanctified Mrs. Darnel, who had such obligations to our family, and in whose house I was to find so certain an asylum, is a fiend of darkness, an instrument of hell, a priestess of destruction!

For the first day or two of my residence at her house, after I was turned out from my father's, she seemed so heartily touched with my misfortune, and so immediately interested in my welfare, that, abstracted from the closeness of our relation, she acquired a considerable share of my esteem, and I could

could not help considering her as a woman of unbounded good-nature, who was kindly appointed by the pitying hand of Providence to mitigate the severity of my affliction. Acquainted by this opinion, I made her acquainted with my whole heart, and determined, as she had the character of being extremely sensible and devout, to regulate my conduct entirely by her advice, till I should be happily blessed with the forgiveness of my father.

I had not, however, been at her house above three days, when she began to alter her tone a little; instead of lamenting the unhappy step I had taken, as she did at first, she spoke of it with more and more indifference; and at last pretty plainly insinuated, that I had erred rather against the severities of custom than the laws of morality; that the very best women in the kingdom had not always been able to preserve themselves unfulfilled; and that it was even idle to distress myself so much on account of a slip, which she herself knew would not be in the least prejudicial to my fortune. I must confess I was astonished to hear a woman, of whose delicacy in matters of reputation I entertained the highest opinion, so easily reconciled to an action I considered as criminal as it was scandalous, and to be no less repugnant to the principles of virtue than the customs of society. I therefore continued silent some moments, hoping that I had misconceived her meaning, and expecting that she would explain herself more to my satisfaction: but here I was totally disappointed; for mistaking my silence as a mark of my approbation, she ventured to be still more explicit, and delivered herself to the following purpose, with an air half gay, half serious, yet carefully attending through the whole to the various changes of my countenance.

Indeed, my dear Miss Mildmay, to be candid with you, I cannot imagine, however widely I differ from the sentiments of the righteous over much, that the indulgence of the passions is any way repugnant to the laws of morality. I shall grant, that the indulgence of them in a manner conformable to the practice of one's country is the most eligible mode; but where people are not married, human nature, as the poet says,

'will be human nature; and a casual
'lapse from the rigid rules of form
'must be sometimes expected. Come,
'my dear,' continued the unblushing
creature, taking hold of my hand, 'that
'Harold is a villain, but if you will
'be governed by me, your little affair
'with him shall by no means deprive
'you of a good husband. You recollect
'your old admirer Sir Harry Hastings.
'Sir Harry passionately loves
'you, and has followed you up to town,
'to make another tender of a heart,
'which has been long devoted to your
'service; he is my intimate acquaintance,
'and has in fact requested my
'assistance, and if you have no objection
'shall drink tea with us this evening.'

You cannot imagine, my dear Harriot, what indignation I felt during the whole time of this delicate harangue; yet willing to discover her utmost designs, I endeavoured to bridle my impatience till she had finished it. When she concluded, I strove to assume as unembarrassed a tone of voice as I was able, and fixing my eyes with an unremitting attention upon her's, I think this was something like my reply. 'When I was free enough, Madam, in obedience to the commands of a mother, to take up my residence at your house, I never expected to be insulted with a conversation of this nature; I did not scruple to acknowledge that I had been accidentally guilty, but at the same time I was in hopes Mrs. Darnel would good-naturedly consider, that I was far from being habitually depraved. How therefore she can so widely mistake my character, or rather how she can act in a manner so unworthy of her own, as to become a kind of advocate for dishonour, fills me with an equal degree of surprize and affliction. When I came here, I expected a friend that would sympathize with my sorrows, not a flatterer that would study to lessen the blackness of my crimes. Human nature, as you say, Madam, may be human nature; but be assured, notwithstanding the error which I have so recently committed, I have no wishes to gratify by a new sacrifice, either of my peace or my character; and that I shall never be so lost to sentiment or shame, as to accept the hand of a worthless fellow, who was formerly

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‘merly discarded on account of his own profligacy, and who is now mean enough to build his hopes of success upon an opinion of mine. Excuse me, Mrs. Darnel: you have a right to receive what company you please in your own house; but consider that I am under no necessity of remaining here, to be affronted by your visitors. I have other relations, Madam, in town, who, I doubt not, will favour me with protection; and if you will only suffer somebody to order a chair, I shall ease you directly of all uneasiness on my account.’

Alarmed at a reply, which I dare say, from my silence at first, she no way expected, Mrs. Darnel seemed greatly surprised that I should put so unaccountable a construction upon her words: if she seemed to speak slightly, she said, of a deviation from the spotless paths of innocence, it was on purpose to restore me to some degree of temper with myself; and if she had recommended Sir Harry Hastings to my consideration, it was entirely from a solicitude for my welfare, that deserved a very different return from such a severity of animadversion as I had been pleased to distinguish it with. Sir Harry was a man of good family and large fortune, unexceptionable in his person, and, for aught she had ever heard to the contrary, unexceptionable also in his manners; on these accounts she did not think him unworthy of my notice: however, since I was so averse to an interview with him, she would take care he should never visit at her house so long as I continued to honour her with my company; and that for the future I might be satisfied she would not drop a single syllable which was capable of giving me the least offence; adding, that from the unremitting rectitude of her past life, there could be no room to suppose she would now become an advocate for dishonour, or betray the cause of that virtue in the decline of her days, which in the giddiest part of her youth she had always regarded as the principal beauty of the female character.

We are all of us, my dear Harriot, ready enough to believe what we wish may be true; and Mrs. Darnel defended herself with such an appearance of integrity, that I was grieved for the tartness of my reply, and begged she would excuse it on account of the distraction

with which my mind must at that time be naturally torn. I then let her into a few passages of Sir Harry’s character, particularly his ruining the two Miss Nettervilles; his insolent attempt to run away with myself, for which you know my poor brother would have called him to a severe account, had not Mr. Townshend put them both under an arrest; and mentioned some instances of his tyranny to inferiors, that had rendered him either contemptible or detested through all the country. Mrs. Darnel affected great surprize at these accounts, declaring she had never heard of any thing, but his attempt to run away with me, which could be mentioned to his prejudice. ‘Even of that,’ says she, ‘I heard but vaguely; I however set it down as a proof of that passion for you, which he still continues to express with the greatest vehemence, and which, before I heard your sentiments, I did not know but the family might be induced to overlook.’

Matters continued entirely to my mind at Mrs. Darnel’s, till Lady Haversham took her leave of me, and went down on the scheme of reconciliation to the Hall. Mrs. Darnel then began to hint something of a concern for Sir Harry, and insinuated, though distantly, a fear, lest the amiable countess should prevail in her brother’s favour; and lest, after all, I should be doomed to the arms of a man who was entitled to nothing but my eternal detestation. I again appeared extremely dissatisfied; she however apologized, and we were again reconciled; but the night after, Harriot—the night after. Does not your heart ache with the strongest apprehensions for your poor Louisa? I know it does; and I even anticipate at this passage the distress which I am sensible you must feel upon my account.

Next morning, after breakfast, Mrs. Darnel told me she was in a great dilemma with regard to an engagement which she had annually at Sir William Nicholson’s in the next street. ‘You must know, my dear,’ said she, ‘Sir William and his lady constantly celebrate the anniversary of their marriage, and for twenty years I have never been absent on that occasion. Now, I would not for the world leave you alone; and yet I do not know how to get excused, if I stay away from Sir William’s: this is the day, and

‘and there is to be a prodigious croud of company there in the evening.’— ‘My dear Mrs. Darhel,’ returned I, ‘you quite distress me with your civility. You must on no condition stay from your friends, for I shall be quite miserable if I think I interfere in the least with your engagements; I insist therefore absolutely on your going, and——’ ‘Well, well,’ interrupted she, ‘since you are so good, I will go; but depend upon it I shall be at home by eleven in the evening.’ The stating of an hour for her return occasioned a fresh dispute; but at last she set out, ordering a chariot, which she had kindly set up on my account the day or two before, notwithstanding the slenderness of her fortune, to come at twelve.

As I was no way inclined to sleep, I sat up in the back-parlour, reading *Clarissa Harlowe*; and had just got into that passage where the vile *Lovelace* attempts the sanctity of her chamber at midnight, in the house of that detestable monster *Sinclair*. I do not know how it was, but I felt an instinctive kind of terror when I came to this place; I could not go on with the story, and began to reflect that, if any body was to break into our house, I should be in a very dangerous situation. It was now almost one o’clock, and not a single soul at home besides myself and the cook; my Sally and Mrs. Darnel’s woman had received leave to be at a dance with some servants in the neighbourhood, and the men were attending the chariot at Sir William Nicholson’s to bring home their mistress. The time, the place, a remote street bordering on the fields of Marybone, and, above all, the subject which I had been just reading, served to fill me with the strongest apprehensions; and I was going more than once to call the cook to sit with me, but that I was fearful the poor woman might be in a doze from excessive fatigue, as she was house maid also, and therefore considered it cruel to disturb her. At last I heard somebody unlock the street-door on the outside; and naturally supposing it to be my Sally and Mrs. Darnel’s woman, who had now returned from their evening’s entertainment, I rang the bell; when who should enter the room, to my inexpressible astonishment, but the villain *Hastings*, wrapped up in a large surcoat, and carrying a dark lanthorn in

his hand, which gleamed an inconceivable horror round the whole apartment? I screamed out, you may naturally imagine, at the sight of so unexpected and suspicious a visitor, and called the cook as loud as I could to come up stairs instantly, at the same time ringing the bell with the greatest violence: but whether she was too fast asleep to hear me, or whether she was privy to the designs of her infamous mistress, I know not; this only I know, that she never once made her appearance, and that I was left entirely to the brutality of a wretch whom I knew to be equally destitute of shame and of humanity.

Finding myself thus barbarously betrayed, I assumed what spirits I could, and asked the midnight ruffian, by what authority he had dared to break into my chamber at such an hour, in such a disguise; and threatened him with the utmost resentment, not only of the laws, but my family. He had now laid down his lanthorn, and unbuttoned his surcoat; and was striving, by all the affectation of the deepest respect, to silence my exclamations; declaring that the happiness of his whole life depended upon me, and that nothing but the dictates of a desperate love could possibly urge him to break in thus violently on my repose. ‘Consider, ever beautiful *Miss Mildmay*,’ cried the monster on his knee, ‘consider how long and how passionately I have loved you. Recollect also, Madam, that you are now thrown out by the inhumanity of a relentless father, and the perfidy of a profligate villain, upon an inhospitable world, which, so far from commiserating your situation, will even feast its malevolence with your distress. To guard you from the ruin which must inevitably burst upon your head in these melancholy circumstances, behold these faithful arms. My fortune and my soul are yours, if you condescend to accept of them; and I shall think myself eternally obliged, if the solicitude which I manifest for your felicity may be able to influence the natural generosity of your temper, to prevent the everlasting destruction of mine.’

As he pronounced this ridiculous speech with every seeming appearance of sincerity, I suppressed the indignation which I should have otherwise discovered at his presumption in joining

my father's name to so opprobrious an epithet, in hopes that I should be able to turn his own arts upon him, and draw some advantages from all this affectation of generosity and affection. I therefore told him, that he had taken an odd way to testify his regard for me, by breaking thus at midnight into my apartment; and that the mysterious manner of his intrusion looked as if he came with some intentions which were totally different from the ends of this passionate protestation; on which account I begged he would immediately retire; and hinted, that, if he still continued his sentiments in my favour, he need not despair of being heard to his satisfaction in the morning.

'A thousand thanks, my angel,' returned the wretch, kissing my hand with a wildness of vehemence, 'for this condescending goodness. Yet why, my adorable Miss Mildmay, if I am to receive any marks of your benignity in the morning, need you now scruple to bless me with some little, some distant token of your approbation? Where a man doats to distraction, like me, an hour's delay is a whole eternity of torture; shorten therefore the time, I beseech you, Madam, and increase the greatness of the obligation by a generous alacrity in bestowing it.'

He was going on in this manner, my dear Harriot, and even proceeding to kiss my cheek, when summoning all the fortitude of my soul, I seized him by the breast, and threw the wretch from me above half the length of the room. 'Despicable villain!' cried I at the same time, 'unhand me; or, by the holy host of Heaven, this moment is your last!' I was really frantick, Harriot; I saw myself betrayed, and had seized a penknife that lay accidentally open on the reading table, absolutely determined to put my threats in execution if he presumed to affront me with another approach. Finding me so greatly enraged, he seemed totally at a loss how to behave, and for some moments stood musing in a state of mingled surprize and irresolution.

Perceiving him thus embarrassed at my behaviour, I determined immediately to alarm the neighbourhood; and, with that view, snatched up one of the candles, thinking, before he recovered from his consternation, to reach the

street door: but the cautious villain was too well prepared; he had five other ruffians planted in the fore parlour, who were to seize me in case I attempted any thing of this kind, and to carry me through a little garden at the back of the house, into a lane that led to the fields; there it seems a coach was in waiting to hurry me off; and the scheme was so settled, that two of these five should ride within side the vehicle, to prevent my screaming, while the three others were to be posted armed without, for fear, after all their precautions, I might find some opportunity of calling for assistance, and excite the humanity of any accidental passengers to an attack.

You cannot conceive, my dear Harriot, when I quitted the room, and found Sir Harry no way inclined to follow me, how my heart throbbed with the expectation of counteracting all Mrs. Darnel's barbarous machinations, and the hope of being able to engage the compassion of some charitable neighbour for my protection till daylight; but when the other wretches rushed out of the street parlour, and barred my passage to the door, I was next to absolutely distracted. I screamed with a violence that almost tore my head to pieces; and, losing all my resolution at once, I fell upon my knees, crying out, 'Spare me, dear gentlemen, spare me! I am a poor unfortunate creature, cast out from my family and friends; and I conjure you, by the tender mercies of the living God, not to assist the infamous purposes of that monster Sir Harry Hastings!'

'Madam,' replied one of the fellows, whose appearance was superior to the rest, 'Sir Harry is a fine gentleman, has long loved you, and means you nothing but what is strictly honourable; remove your apprehensions therefore—'

'Oh, Sir!' interrupted I, 'whence this violence, if he means nothing but what is honourable? Why am I, at such an hour as this, beset in my own lodgings, and treated with all the illiberal freedoms of a brothel-like audacity? If you are gentlemen, you will surely snatch a poor, unhappy young creature, from destruction, who has never done any human being the least injury; or, if you are men whose necessities have obliged you to under-
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‘take an office repugnant to the natural goodness of your hearts, you must surely perform a virtuous action for reward with as much readiness as you can consent to the perpetration of a monstrous crime. Hear me, then, dear gentlemen, I beseech you! conduct me but to Lady Haversham’s, in Grosvenor Square; lodge me but safely in the next house; and I solemnly protest, before God, that, let the wretch who has employed you for this barbarous purpose promise what he will, you shall receive double that sum, and a thousand thanks into the bargain, for consulting your own safety, and disappointing his infamous designs.’

I would have expostulated farther with the savages, my dear Harriot, but the vile Sir Harry now made his appearance, and asked on what account they delayed the execution of their plan; endeavouring to raise me from the ground at the same time, and ordering the rest to assist in carrying me to the coach. It was in vain I struggled, in vain I shrieked for help: the monsters obeyed his commands with the most implicit readiness; and my spirits were at last so exhausted by the sharpness of my terror, and the fatigue of my resistance, that I sunk lifeless on the floor. In this state they easily carried me to the coach; and it was ten o’clock next, or, more properly speaking, that morning, before I recovered my senses sufficiently to recollect any one circumstance of the whole transaction.

About ten o’clock, however, I came a little to myself, and found that I was in a very handsome bed, that the room was extremely well furnished, and that there were two female attendants with hartsorn, and a number of other restoratives, ready to administer every assistance which might be necessary for my recovery. From these women, who were Sir Harry’s housekeeper and her daughter, I learned that I was brought to this house about four o’clock in the morning; that several times on the road Sir Harry and his companions were in violent apprehensions for my life; that the moment they arrived, I was consigned over to the care of the women; and that, till within the last two hours, I had been in the strongest hystericks imaginable. The housekeeper added, that she

was sure her master must love me with the sincerest affection, for he had been like a distracted man on my account, and had repeatedly sworn to lay violent hands on himself if my indisposition should be productive of any fatal consequences. As the women seemed to be not only communicative but good-natured, weak as I was, I made them acquainted with their master’s conduct, told them my name and family, and offered to reward them above their utmost expectations, if they could, by any fortunate contrivance, facilitate my escape. To this they replied, that they should be very willing to oblige me, but that their lives would not be safe if they acted in the least contrary to the will of their master. The youngest, particularly, thought it surprizing that I should wish to quit so fine a gentleman as Sir Harry, who had so great an estate, and who was ready, she was sure, to marry me the moment I thought proper to give my consent. From this, and some other expressions which dropped from the daughter, I found that she herself was in love with the wretch; and consequently thought it wonderful how any body else could mention him with the smallest indication either of aversion or contempt.

Disappointed in my hopes of escaping by means of the women, and finding them entirely at the devotion of their profligate master, I desired they would help me up, not knowing how soon they might leave me to the monster’s brutality. They complied, but reluctantly; observing that, after what I had undergone, rest was absolutely necessary for me; and declaring that they were certain I must be greatly indisposed. Indeed, Harriot, they said true; I was extremely ill; and, could I have removed my apprehensions of Sir Harry, I should have followed their advice with the utmost satisfaction. When they had dressed me, or, more properly speaking, when they had restored my dress to a little order, they led me into the dining-room, and prevailed upon me to swallow two dishes of tea, and a dish of chocolate: after this they withdrew; but the daughter returned in a few minutes after, to tell me that Sir Harry was coming to attend me; and the message was scarcely delivered before the horrid fellow actually entered with an

an air of forced complaisance, very visibly mixed with some degree of confusion, and a great deal of malignity.

I was sitting in a great chair when he entered; and, thinking it best to betray as little fear as possible, I fixed my eyes upon him with an intenseness of determined indignation, and asked him how long I was to remain a prisoner in his house. To which he replied, till I wanted an inclination to quit it. 'But, Madam,' says he, seating himself on the opposite side of the fire-place, 'I am now come to have a little serious conversation with you; and, as the nature of this conversation will be of the last importance to your own happiness, I hope, upon that account, you will favour me with your attention. From the closeness of our neighbourhood in the country, my dear Miss Mildmay, it is impossible but that some particulars of my conduct must have reached your family, that were no way advantageous to my character; yet, from the same closeness of neighbourhood, you yourself must have heard that I declined all alliance with many young ladies of distinction, merely on account of my attachment for you; declaring that, so long as you continued single, I never should think of any other woman: you also know, Madam, that when you thought proper to reject my addresses, your whole house allowed my proposal to be extremely disinterested, and acknowledged that I did not want for love, however I might be deficient in desert. That love, Madam, instead of being extinguished by repulse, has, on the contrary, acquired additional force from opposition, and has driven me upon expedients in which I have acquired nothing but disgrace: it has forced me to the meannefs of keeping spies continually about your person; and your very woman, Sally, in whom you so confidently trusted—nay, Madam, do not start—is nothing better than one of my instruments.

'As long, however, as you remained absolutely disengaged, I bore my own rejection, and even the shame which resulted from my unsuccessful attempt to carry you off before, with some tolerable share of temper; but the moment that cursed Harold was declared the happy man, I determined,

'let the consequence be what it would, to prevent the celebration of your union: and had not a rupture happened otherwise between you, I was resolved you never should be his, though I even got him pistolled on his way to the church. When you were sent up to town, I followed you instantly, and established my interest so effectually with Mrs. Darnel, that she consented to my carrying you off from her house, if there was no likelihood of my succeeding by any other means. There was no likelihood—on the contrary, lady Haversham set off to bring about a reconciliation between her family and yours; and the thing may be concluded done, for every body knows that woman is irresistible.

'Such, Madam, is the history of your present captivity. Now to what must follow. After having gone these lengths to get you into my possession, it cannot be supposed that the power of man will ever prevail upon me to give you up. Nor, indeed, is it likely that any body will be able to discover you, since Mrs. Darnel's own interest, as well as her reputation, must oblige her to account for your absence in a manner widely different from the truth. For these reasons, therefore, Madam, I leave it to the determination of your own good sense, whether it will not be much better for you to think of uniting cheerfully with me, than urge me to the disagreeable necessity of exerting a power, which, however unjustly it may be obtained, nevertheless places your destiny entirely in my hands. Believe me, Miss Mildmay, I love you with the most passionate extravagance, yet with the nicest sentiment of honour. If I did not intend honourably, what could prevent me, in a house where my will is as absolute as fate, from gratifying my inclination in any manner I might wish? But I do not know how it is, culpable as I may have been with regard to others, there is something about you which always excited my deepest veneration, and awes me at this instant, when I am in possession of your person, from entertaining any intention injurious to your character. I have talked a great deal, and shall now acquaint you with my final determination in a few words. From the purity of my views, Madam,

dam, and the impossibility of your ever escaping from this house, I am in hopes that your generosity and your goodness will induce you to accept of the offer, which I again repeat, of my hand and fortune. Make a merit, therefore, Madam, of necessity, and consent to my propositions with a good grace; for, be assured, your refusal shall excuse you nothing, as I have a clergyman already in the house, who is not to be terrified from his duty by screams, and will perform the necessary ceremony, were you even struggling in the pangs of death, and he himself to be destined the next moment to inevitable destruction.

Inhuman, barbarous, remorseless villain! Oh, Harriot! do not you wonder at my patience in listening so tamely to so long and so audacious an address? But, indeed, my dear, the odious man terrified me to the last degree by the excess of his confidence; and, in proportion as it was proper for me to interrupt him, I found myself less and less able to break in upon his horrid harangue. But a motion which he made to seize my hand roused me instantly to an exertion of my spirits; and, spurning him from me with all the disdain I could possibly assume, yet still possessing my recollection, I spoke to him in the following manner. 'Hear me, Hastings! execrable monster, hear me! nor imagine, because I have been infamously betrayed into your power, that any thing can fright away my reluctance to your person, or my hatred of your heart. Know, then, that should instant death be the consequence of my refusal, no force on earth shall ever make me yours. I always despised, I always detested you! and this last outrage of which you have been guilty, gives such an everlasting edge to my aversion, that, if I retain in the next world any sense of what has passed in this, I shall still consider you through all eternity with the same unremitting contempt, and the same unremitting detestation. What, Sir, do you suppose that the more reason I have for my abhorrence, the more I should relax in my resentments; or think that, if your addresses were repulsed when I thought you infinitely less atrocious, there is a possibility of succeeding now, when you are covered with aggravated crimes? No, Hastings, no!

The very supposition of such a circumstance is a fresh argument of your unworthiness, and only serves to render you additionally odious to my imagination. Free me, therefore, from this infamous house, I desire you! Free me instantly from this house! for, by the mighty God of heaven, the hour that makes me yours, puts an end to my life, and may possibly endanger the safety of your own.'

'Upon my word, Madam,' replied the insulting wretch, 'this tone of voice is perfectly tragical: you really talk this admirably; and, if your favourite Harold was not to the full as great a profligate as myself, I should think it impossible for you to overlook the smallest deviation from the paths of virtue. But I appeal to the rectitude of your judgment against the prepossession of your heart; and, since you force me to put the question, let me ask you, which is most entitled to your regard, the man who has not only ruined, but forsaken you, or the man who, with all the obloquy of that ruin upon your head, is willing to take you to his arms, and is ready even to think himself happy in a participation with your disgrace?'

Oh, Harriot! do not you pity me, do not you bleed for me here? Stained and polluted as I was, how could I reply to the equity of this reproach? I felt it, as Hamlet says, 'in my heart's core—in my heart of hearts;' and the propriety of it struck me instantly dumb. O, how mean, how despicable is guilt, when it is even incapable to retort an insult from the unworthy, and shrinks before the judgment-seat of Vice with as great a degree of timidity, as if it was immediately arraigned before the awful tribunal of Virtue! That Harold too—but save me, Harriot—I must not suffer myself to think of that; I cannot find an epithet to distinguish him by: my reason is impatient to brand him with the most detestable—but this infatuated bosom eternally beats in his behalf; and, though I strive to despise and abhor him, yet still I feel I passionately love.

As I continued in a state of silent confusion at this unanswerable retort of Sir Harry's, the wretch rang the bell with a determined air, and the house-keeper entering to know his commands; 'Mrs. Lawton,' said he, 'desire the gentlemen in the parlour to walk up.'

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The woman withdrew ; and, before I could recollect myself sufficiently to ask him for what purpose they were to walk up, three of the fellows who had been concerned in carrying me off the night before, attended by a most bold looking man in a clergyman's habit, were in the room. This was a sight which I was utterly unable to withstand : my brain was instantly on fire ; I screamed with a wildness of distraction ; and, just as the clergyman was coming up to me, I sunk down lifeless on the floor. What became of me for six whole weeks I know not. Mrs. Lawson tells me, that I was in such strong hystericks, after the presence of the men had terrified me into a swoon, that they were under a necessity of giving over their purpose for that time ; and that it was with the greatest difficulty she, her daughter, and two of the house-maids, could remove me to my room. Here it seems the violent agitation of mind, and the excessive fatigue which I had undergone, threw me into a fortunate fever, which deprived me of my senses ; and, though the monster Hastings omitted nothing which could possibly tend to my recovery, yet it was full six weeks before I was brought to my recollection. About this time, the natural goodness of my constitution triumphing over the fury of my disorder, I became somewhat sensible, and was called back to the pungent reflections of a sensibility, which made me look with an inconceivable envy upon madness.

During the dangerous part of my illness, Mr. Lawson informed me, that her wretch of a master was absolutely frantick ; that he frequently tore his hair, and stamped upon the ground with all the agitation of a bedlamite, swearing he would not survive me if I happened to die ; and raving, that the grave should at least unite him to me, should there be no possibility of a union with me by any other means. Though nothing was ever more odious to me than the thoughts of this fellow's passion, yet it was very fortunate that he loved me to so preposterous an excess ; for his brutal companions, before I fell dangerously ill, being no strangers to the crime of your unhappy friend, were continually ridiculing his intention of marrying a creature who had already parted with her honour, and were as often advising him to profit by the opportunity which

Mrs. Darnel had put so luckily in his hands. They assured him, that a woman who had been familiar with one man would make no mighty scruple to be familiar with a second ; they mentioned my hatred of him as the greatest of all affectations ; and insisted that nothing could be so contemptible as his stooping to accept of a woman for his wife, whom another had already possessed as his mistress. These arguments, Mrs. Lawson hinted, would wind him up sometimes to a downright determination of proceeding to the most absolute violations : he seemed fearful of being despised by his friends, and frequently talked of pursuing their advice ; but, in the midst of all his resolutions, the desire which he had to make me his irrevocably, and the dread he was under lest I should commit some instant act of desperation on myself, if he went to such shocking extremities, prevented him from executing his horrid design ; so that when he found I was really in danger, every thought of an illicit nature was immediately sacrificed to his concern for my recovery. By this means, my dear Harriot, I very happily escaped every actual dishonour ; and, though his detestable passion was the source of such exquisite distress, still it was that very passion which was the ultimate cause of my preservation.

I will not, my dear Harriot, trespass on your patience by a minute detail of all I suffered in this odious house during a period of seven months. Suffice it, that I was scarcely recovered from my first fit of illness, but a fresh attempt to force me into a marriage brought on a relapse, which saved me from a world of the most insupportable persecution, and changed the detestable importunities of Hastings into a fresh concern for my life. This second interposition of Providence, for I consider it as such in my favour, lasted three months ; and the wretch was so miserable at that time on my account, that he expressed a resolution of using no means but humility and confinement to work upon my temper for the future. In about three months time I was again tolerably recovered, and beginning again to dread some lawless attempt from Sir Harry, when one of those common, yet unexpected accidents, which are sometimes productive of events that cannot be brought about by the utmost exertion of human wisdom, set me free from captivity,



captivity, and opened a new scene in my history, perhaps not less extraordinary than any of the former passages.

Sir Harry, and some of his fellow-libertines, had been making merry below stairs one day, (for I should have told you that, during the whole time of my imprisonment, I never once eat a morsel out of those rooms which were particularly set apart for my use) and sat up, according to custom, so extremely late, that none of them retired sober to their rooms. I myself heard some of them very noisy on the stairs when they broke up, and therefore could give a probable guess at their situations. I do not know what was the matter with me, but that night I would not pull off my cloaths, and only threw myself across the bed, to indulge myself in one of those melancholy reveries which are generally pleasing to the unfortunate. Between three and four, however, I grew a little heavy, and had just began to doze, when Mrs. Lawson and her daughter, who always lay in an adjoining bed in the same room, as well to prevent me from any possibility of escaping, as to take care that my apartments were not approached by any of her master's friends, gave a violent shriek; and, jumping out of bed with the utmost precipitation, exclaimed, that the house was in flames. It was now about the beginning of October, and wanted a considerable while to day. I started up, and found the matter just as they represented it, the fire blazing fiercely through the windows; and the servants, who were by this time alarmed, were some of them unlocking the street-door, and unbolting the parlour-windows, while others were busied in assisting their intoxicated masters out of bed. This was an opportunity, my dear Harriot, not to be neglected: already dressed, I took advantage of the general confusion, and slipping out in nothing but a black silk night-gown, while every body's attention was employed on something else, I gained the road, dark as it was, and trudged on without knowing, or indeed caring, which way I went, so I could but get far enough from that detested Hastings. The only apprehension I laboured under, was that of being pursued and overtaken by some of the wretch's emissaries, the moment he became acquainted with my flight. But, as if Providence was particularly determined to rescue me from his hands,

I was overtaken by a ministering angel, in the humble shape of a gardener's wife, who was singing with all the cheerfulness of a benevolent mind, and going with a cart-load of vegetables to one of the London markets. I addressed myself to her at once; told her that I was an unfortunate young woman, who had been carried off from my friends by force about seven months before; and that the villain's house, who had taken me away, being that moment on fire, I had seized the opportunity, and made my escape: I therefore begged her protection, and assured her I would make it worth her while, if she would be kind enough to take me along with her, as I was fearful of being pursued and carried back. The good woman, who had ordered a boy that drove the horses to stop the moment I spoke to her, replied, that whoever I was, I appeared to be in distress, and that, she said, was a sufficient claim to her assistance at any time. So saying, she let down a little ladder from the cart, and desiring the boy to help me up, I was seated by herself in an instant. As she had a lanthorn by her in the vehicle, she could now have a tolerable idea of my person; and, after looking at me for a minute or so, in the least offensive manner she could assume, she stood up, and taking off a warm joseph, in which she was buttoned up herself, 'Come, Madam,' said she, 'this is a cold morning; you do not seem much acquainted with this way of travelling, therefore let me help you on with this coat.—Indeed you must have it,' perceiving I made a motion to decline being obliged at her expence; 'and you must let me tie this handkerchief about your head too. Poor soul, how you tremble! but have a stout heart: I will be sworn, from your looks, that you are a good creature; and, depend upon it, you shall not want for a friend while my name is Deborah Dobson.'

O, Harriot! how was I charmed with the uncultivated benignity of this worthy rustick! A tear of gratitude rose instantly into my eye; and all I could say was, 'Good Mrs. Dobson, I thank you.' We had not rode above a mile from Hampstead, (for there, my dear, it was that Hastings had his house) when the honest, obliging creature's joseph and handkerchief preserved me almost miraculously; for Sir Harry having missed me in a very little time, had dispatched

K servants

servants every way, I suppose, in search of me, not at all attending to the safety of his house; and two of them now came up to the cart, and enquired of Mrs. Dobson, if she had met any young woman on the road. Mrs. Dobson replied she had not; and the fellows pursued their course furiously on towards town, saying, that probably somebody on horseback, or in a post-chaise, had taken her up, since it was impossible for her to walk so far in the time.

You cannot think how my heart fluttered, my dear Harriot, at this rencounter, nor imagine what a degree of satisfaction the worthy woman expressed at my fortunate escape. 'You see, Madam,' said she, 'how lucky it was that you consented to be wrapped up: that Joseph is an old companion of mine; and I shall love it as long as I live, for being the means of your deliverance.' In this manner we reached Whitechapel, I think she called it, where there is a market kept; and where she had a sister, she told me, a widow woman, who kept a snug little house, and would afford me all the accommodation in her power. Accordingly, she led me directly to her sister's, who, it seems, was a considerable dealer in butter and eggs, and was now preparing to set out upon the business of the day, a most comfortable breakfast of coffee being already on the table, in a neat stone kitchen, amply furnished with pewter and brass, of so shining a complexion, as bore the strongest testimony imaginable to the cleanliness of the owner.

'Molly,' said Mrs. Dobson to her sister upon entering, 'I have brought a stranger with me to town this morning: here is a young lady who was carried off from her friends by some scoundrel about seven months ago, and kept all that time at the villain's house at Hampstead. The house, thank God! was afire as we passed by; and the young lady, while all the family was busy about other affairs, slipped out, overtook my cart, and here I have brought her to be taken care of till she can send to her relations.'

'God bless her dear soul!' returned the other, 'I shall take as much care of her as if she was my own child. I warrant her poor father and mother have felt many an aching heart upon her account. But come, Madam, sit down; let us have a dish of coffee,

and then we will shew you to a bed, where you may rest a little after the fatigue of your journey.' So saying, she helped me off with my Joseph and handkerchief; while a pretty, modest-looking young woman, about eighteen, who appeared to be her daughter, kindly reached me a chair, and seemed studious for opportunities to oblige me.

After breakfast the two sisters preparing to go away, recommended me to the care of Sally, the young woman of whom I have been just speaking, and wished me, in a very affectionate manner, a good morning. Before they withdrew, however, I begged to speak to my worthy friend Mrs. Dobson in a private room: the good woman readily indulged my request; and, if I might judge by the benignity which enlightened her honest countenance, she came with the more readiness, from a supposition that I stood in farther need of her services. When we were alone, 'My dear Mrs. Dobson,' said I, 'you have eternally obliged me; you have been my preceptor, my guardian angel; but I shall be the most miserable creature in the world, unless you kindly accept this trifle,' endeavouring to squeeze five guineas into her hand, 'for a pair of gloves.'—'Madam,' replied the generous Mrs. Dobson, in a style much above her condition, 'I am no way sorry that you make me this offer, because it confirms my good opinion of you; but I should think very meanly of myself, if I was capable of taking a reward for performing a common act of humanity. God bless you, my sweet young lady,' continued she, kissing my cheek, 'and send you a happy meeting with your friends! While you stay here, every thing will be at your service, I dare say; and, humble as we are in the world, be assured you have fallen among people, who would rather confer obligations than receive them.' Oh, Harriot, these are the persons whom your great ones look upon with contempt; these are the persons whom the insolence of opulence or pomp, so frequently considers as little superior to the merely animal creation: yet see by what souls they are informed! The mind of this woman, my dear, would have done honour to a coronet; yet how many women are there with coronets, who would shed the smallest degree of credit upon her cart!

After

After the departure of the two industrious sisters, Sally, to whose care I was consigned, advised me, in a very pretty manner, to lie down, insisting upon helping me to undress, and begging I would consider myself at home in their family. I complied with Sally's obliging intreaties, and accordingly went to bed; but, alas! my dear, I awoke in a high fever, and was actually delirious before the good young woman's mother returned from market. By the excess of the worthy people's tenderness, and the care of an excellent apothecary, who, it seems, attended that admirable institution called the Magdalen, about which you and I have so frequently talked in the country, I was, in as short a time as possible, recovered from my illness; but, though my health was re-established, my mind was totally unhinged. The numberless distresses which I had of late sustained, joined to the consciousness of having been the original author of every misfortune myself, were too much for me. Ignorant whether my brother was living or dead; satisfied that my poor father and mother must be torn by the sharpest of all anxieties; and convinced that my Harriot herself must have given me up as a lost, abandoned creature; I was continually raving about my fall, and wishing for some asylum, where I might waste out the remainder of my days in penitence for my sin. Instead, therefore, of desiring to write to those who would interest themselves in my behalf, I looked upon the whole world as my irreconcilable enemy; yet, though I incessantly raved, I was nevertheless apparently calm, and perfectly consistent. It was in vain that poor Mrs. Dobson, the honest woman her sister, and the whole family, opposed my resolution of entering the Magdalen; it was in vain that they assured me of a perpetual asylum with them. I continued inflexible; and what was the absolute result of my delirium, they, who could naturally judge by nothing but appearances, set down as the consequence of premeditated determination; so that at last they consented, and I was received, though with some essential deviations from the customary mode of accepting penitents, the good apothecary managing matters with as much delicacy as could be wished. I have since, however, learned, that had any of Hastings's people remained about Hampstead, to satisfy Mrs. Dobson's enquiries, or

could she have prevailed on me to give any account of myself after my illness, I never should have entered this place. But Sir Harry's house, it seems, being entirely burnt down, the whole family was removed before her enquiries began; and I was so strenuously bent upon my scheme, that I evaded an answer to her questions to myself, with a degree of cunning almost wonderful in my circumstances.

I have now, my dear Harriot, been in this house above three months, and find that my little understanding is as well established as my health. I have therefore employed myself for some time in drawing up the foregoing account for your information, and submit it entirely to your own discretion, either to conceal it, or to lay it before my relations. My friend Mrs. Dobson, and her sister, with their good-natured niece and daughter, visit me at every convenient opportunity; and I have now made the worthy people acquainted with the history of my misfortunes, though I have not yet informed them either of my betrayer's name, or the name of my own family: and, what is still more, I have persuaded Sally's mother to accept of fifty guineas, which I had in my purse, for all her trouble and expence; and Mrs. Dobson has promised to wear a ring for my sake, but not till she sees me out of this house. Somehow, worthy as these people are, they look upon publick penance as disreputable: perhaps, according to the modes of this country, it may be so; but what in fact is custom, where conscience is solely to determine upon virtues and upon crimes? It is true, if my imagination had not been disturbed, I had never dreamed of entering into a place particularly dedicated to the publick penitence of prostitution: yet, alas! Harriot, how am I better than the unhappy poor creatures, whom the pinching hand of necessity, or the poignant stings of remorse, have brought to the same salutary, yet humiliating habitation? Have I not violated the sacred laws of virtue? Have I not blasted my reputation? Have I not torn a father's heart with unutterable anguish? Have I not steeped the pillow of an excellent mother in despair? And may not the generous youth, my brother, be long since murdered on my account? O save me, Harriot, from that dreadful supposition! Snatch me,

if possible, from my fears upon this occasion; or my portion must be distraction without end. Gracious God! what a wretch do I appear on the smallest recollection! And shall such a creature as I, imagine she is any ways lessened by mingling with those who, like herself, have sacrificed the dignity of their sex, and the honour of their families? No, Harriot, this is the properest habitation for me now! Here meditation, as the poet says, may find room even to madness; and here the streaming eye of a heart-directed contrition may possibly wash away the stains of guilt, and induce the awful Father of mercies to overlook my crimes. But my poor parents! my nobly-minded brother! O Harriot, if I yet retain any share in your remembrance, write to me instantly! I shall not close my eyes till the return of the post. A letter directed to Mrs. Carter's, my kind hostess, in Whitechapel, for Charlotte Windham, (the name which I assumed in the unsettled state of my mind, to prevent my family from receiving any farther disgrace) will be immediately forwarded to the lost, unhappy wretch, who possessed the first place in your friendship when she was

LOUISA MILDMAV.

LETTER VII.

SIR ROBERT HAROLD TO CHARLES
MELMOTH, ESQ.

CALAIS, DECEMBER 16.

OH, Melmoth! my Louisa is innocent! her account is authenticated by the strongest of all testimonies, the acknowledgment of Hastings himself; and the villain has, by this time, probably atoned with his life, for all the tortures of her bosom, and all the agonies of mine. I have just reached this place; and have sat down, while a little vessel is getting ready to sail with me for Dover, to send you a cursory account of particulars, lest any accident should prevent me from being with you in London as early as the post.

I had just received Lady Haversham's copy of Louisa's affecting history, which you sent me with your last, when, all life and spirits, I dressed for the opera, and happened to be introduced into a box where an English gentleman was

sitting alone, with whom I fell into so familiar a conversation, that I accepted a proposal which he made, of eating a bit of supper at a tavern after the performance; and this the more readily, as his appearance bore an indication of fashion, and as, in the course of our chat, he mentioned his being intimate with two or three gentlemen of my acquaintance.

When the opera was over, we retired to one of the best houses in the neighbourhood of the theatre; where, after drinking two or three glasses of Burgundy, he mentioned that his name was Sir Harry Hastings, and that he had a seat in the county of Oxford. I need not tell you, that this information set me instantly on fire. I was just going to break out, and to demand satisfaction for his outrages to Louisa, when, recollecting it would be best to hear his own account of matters, for fear, after all, that Miss Mildmay might draw up a story to answer her own purposes, and trespass a little upon veracity to extenuate the infamy of her flight. With this view, I asked Sir Harry, if he was acquainted with the Mildmays, as I knew something of a gentleman who had paid his addresses to a young lady of that family. 'Acquainted with them!' replied Sir Harry; 'yes, I am perfectly acquainted with them; and it is, in a great measure, on account of that very young lady that I have quitted England. You must know, Sir,' continued the communicative baronet, 'that I am a near neighbour of the Mildmays, and have, for above four years, entertained a passion of the most extravagant nature for their daughter; but somehow, though my fortune was as good as any other admirer's, and my proposals much more advantageous, still some freedoms which I had taken with the women, created insurmountable objections to my character, and my addresses were rejected with a degree of disrespect that gave me no little mortification. Stung with resentment at the cavalier manner in which I was treated, and burning also to obtain Miss Mildmay, I made a fruitless attempt to carry her off. In some time after the failure of this design, one Sir Robert Harold (possibly the gentleman you mean, Sir) commenced an acquaintance at Bath with Miss Mildmay,

‘ Mildmay, and worked himself so
‘ successfully into her affections, that
‘ a day was set apart for the celebration
‘ of their nuptials, though this happy
‘ lover was, to the full, as great a pro-
‘ fligate as myself. The family, how-
‘ ever, paid dear for the preference
‘ which they gave this gentleman; for,
‘ before the wedding-day, Sir Robert
‘ found means to gain the last favour
‘ from Miss Mildmay; and a quarrel
‘ happening between them immediately
‘ after, the intended bridegroom fairly
‘ took his leave, and left the disdainful
‘ Louisa to feel, in turn, every sting
‘ of disappointment, and every pun-
‘ gency of disgrace.

‘ Miss Mildmay on this was instantly
‘ sent to town, to the house of a rela-
‘ tion, one Mrs. Darnel; and, as I
‘ had my spies continually at work, I
‘ found out at once the place of her
‘ destination, and followed her instantly;
‘ being still so ridiculously besotted,
‘ that her affair with Harold no way
‘ lessened either the excess of my love,
‘ or the extravagance of my veneration.
‘ In fact, what would have damped the
‘ ardour of any other man’s passion,
‘ only served to increase the fervour of
‘ mine; so that, instead of thinking to
‘ possess her on the same terms with that
‘ lucky dog Harold, I was uncommon-
‘ ly desirous of making her mine for
‘ ever. I wanted to be sure of her;
‘ and, notwithstanding I had a thou-
‘ sand times ridiculed other fellows, for
‘ scandalously stooping to patch up a
‘ cracked reputation, still I went on,
‘ as if her character had been unble-
‘ mished; and felt infinitely more un-
‘ easiness on account of her prepossession
‘ for the destroyer of her honour, than
‘ for her actual deviation from the sen-
‘ timents of virtue. But I beg your
‘ pardon,’ cried Hastings, interrupting
‘ himself: ‘ I am trespassing on your
‘ leisure by a dull repetition of an affair
‘ which cannot possibly afford you the
‘ smallest entertainment. People are
‘ apt to tease others with those circum-
‘ stances which affect their own peace;
‘ and I never hear Miss Mildmay’s
‘ name mentioned, but I am for enter-
‘ ing into an account of my passion for
‘ her, and a narrative of my various
‘ disappointments.’

‘ O, Sir,’ replied I, ‘ you cannot
‘ oblige me more, than by indulging
‘ yourself on the subject. I am ex-

‘ tremely entertained by relations of this
‘ nature; and, if there is no particular
‘ secret——’ ‘ Secret, Sir!’ returned
‘ my brother baronet; ‘ O there is no
‘ secret. I dare say, by this time, eve-
‘ ry thing is publick enough in Eng-
‘ land; and therefore I can have no
‘ objection to gratify your curiosity,
‘ since such a gratification is the highest
‘ pleasure I can do myself. You must
‘ know, Sir, that Miss Mildmay had
‘ scarcely arrived at her cousin Dar-
‘ nel’s, when the prevailing rhetorick
‘ of one thousand guineas, and a five
‘ hundred pound annuity for life, pre-
‘ vailed upon the worthy relation to de-
‘ liver her into my hands. The price,
‘ extravagant as it was, I did not mat-
‘ ter sixpence; but it seems the uncon-
‘ scionable Jezabel was to receive some-
‘ thing very handsome from Harold’s
‘ sister, Lady Haversham, for contriv-
‘ ing a method of removing those in-
‘ conveniencies to which the beautiful
‘ delinquent might be exposed during
‘ her absence from her family; such as
‘ want of equipage, and other essen-
‘ tial articles. These, Lady Haver-
‘ sham, as Harold’s sister, could not
‘ be seen immediately to furnish, as
‘ Miss Mildmay’s delicacy would be
‘ alarmed; and, as Mrs. Darnel’s cir-
‘ cumstances were narrow, she was to
‘ receive a secret sufficiency for the pur-
‘ pose, and to be properly considered
‘ for her politeness into the bargain.
‘ This was the reason why she insisted
‘ upon the exorbitant terms I have men-
‘ tioned. But enough of terms; let
‘ it satisfy, therefore, that she contrived
‘ a feasible excuse to leave Louisa alone
‘ one evening, that the servants were
‘ all sent out of the way, and that, with
‘ the assistance of four or five friends,
‘ who were provided in case of acci-
‘ dents, I carried her off to a house
‘ which I had at Hampstead, and kept
‘ her there for full seven months.’

Now, Melmoth, see my astonishing
command of temper. ‘ Seven months!’
interrupted I, *so* calmly. ‘ Well, and
‘ surely in that time you had opportu-
‘ nities enough of carrying your point,
‘ either by marriage or a more expe-
‘ ditious method; you understand me.’
—‘ No, by all that’s good!’ replied he;
‘ strange as it may appear, I was to-
‘ tally disappointed of success. She
‘ was in a violent fever the principal
‘ part of the time; and, in the inter-
‘ vals

'vals of her recovery, nothing could either persuade or terrify her into an acceptance of me. The few friends who were in the secret, advised me to proceed by other means, and laughed incessantly on account of my romantic purity of affection, as they termed it, for a cast mistress. Their ridicule too was the more severe, because I had been myself one of the very wildest in the whole knot; and had taken such liberties at various times with the sex, as rendered my present behaviour to the last degree extraordinary. There is nothing which we can stand so little as the shaft of ridicule. I was a thousand times determined to prosecute their advice; and frequently blushed in secret at the littleness of my conduct, in thinking of Miss Mildmay for a wife. Yet my unaccountable love got the better of my shame, and I was terrified from attempting any actual violation, because I knew the greatness of her spirit; and was apprehensive, that in such a case, she might lay a desperate hand upon her person: she had repeatedly threatened as much, and I am positive would have been as good as her word.'

'It is wonderful,' interrupted I, 'that some of your friends did not speak of her being with you; that none of your servants, as you were so near a neighbour of the Mildmays, did not, at some time, write to their friends in the country about the young lady; or, that the physicians——'

'O, the easiest things in the world to manage!' cried Sir Harry. 'I had secrets of my friends, as a security for the preservation of mine: my servants were all true to the back-bone, and had been tried a thousand times; and as for the physicians, an additional fee made them as silent as the grave at any time.'

'Well,' interrogated I, 'and was it possible that she could escape at last out of your hands, without rewarding you for all the trouble which you were at upon her account?'

'It *was* possible,' replied Sir Harry, 'because she *did*; and I will tell you by what unfortunate accident. A parcel of us had been making merry one evening below stairs, and we were all pretty well in for it before we thought of going to bed. For

my part, though I had drank very near four bottles, I had no inclination to undress; I therefore took up a volume of Tristram Shandy, which lay by the bed side, and continued so long at this, that nature was at last wearied out, and I sunk insensibly into so sound a sleep, that it was with much difficulty they could wake me when the house was in flames; for the bed-curtains by some means reaching my candle, the whole furniture was instantly in a blaze, and the fire, I suppose, spread through the other apartments with the greatest rapidity: in the confusion occasioned by this unlucky circumstance, Miss Mildmay contrived to make her escape; and though, the moment her flight was discovered, I posted messengers through all the different roads, and even continued an indefatigable search after her for above two months, I never could gain any satisfactory account. Tired out at length with a search which was productive of nothing but disappointment and mortification, I gave her over, and quitted England, in hopes that distance and time would mitigate the distresses of my mind, if it could not even restore my tranquillity. So much, Sir, for Miss Mildmay; and now I have been so communicative, I hope you will not think me impertinent, if I ask your name, and beg to know what part of England is favoured with your residence.'

'That,' returned I, 'you shall soon know: my name is Harold. I have an estate in Somersetshire, but my principal residence, when I am in England, is in Grosvenor Square.'

Have you ever, my dear Charles, particularly remarked Garrick, in the second act, I think it is, of Lear, where Goneril has struck off one half of his followers, and the poor old king tells his melancholy tale to Regan, from whom he expects to meet the most dutiful returns of filial gratitude and affection: have you, I say, remarked the intense, the inexpressible astonishment of the venerable monarch, when, instead of receiving the least consolation from the only child of which he now reckons himself possessed, the unnatural harpy aggravates the indignity he has suffered, and desires him even to dismiss one half of those knights which have yet been spared

spared him by her infamous sister? If you recollect the face of our modern Roscius in that celebrated scene, you will have some tolerable idea of the amazement which this reply instantly spread over the whole countenance of Hastings. 'Harold!' exclaimed he; 'Harold!' drawing his chair insensibly from the table, and fixing his eyes on me with an absolute wildness of surprise. 'Pray, Sir, are you the Sir Robert Harold, who so lately courted Miss Mildmay?'

'The very same,' cried I, running to the door, and bolting it, 'and you are the Sir Harry Hastings, who have been villain enough to carry off that admirable woman in a forcible manner from her family; and to imprison her for several months in a house, where her delicacy was to be treated with a continued round of outrage, and where the imprisonment of her person was to do an irreparable injury to her reputation. Draw, Sir! for the same providential dispensation which has delivered her out of your hands, now delivers you up for punishment to mine.'

'Mighty pretty, truly!' returned Sir Harry, clapping his hand also upon his sword, but retreating a little; 'and so I have been all this while unboasting myself to my greatest enemy, upon a full supposition that I was making an agreeable acquaintance, if not a valuable friend? Truly, a very pretty rencounter; but I deserve it all. What business had this damned tongue of mine to run on so impertinently in the company of an absolute stranger? And so, Sir Robert Harold, I must give you satisfaction for behaving like an infamous scoundrel to Miss Mildmay?'

'Sir,' replied I impatiently, 'this is no time for words. The man who could behave basely to Louisa Mildmay, must be the greatest of all villains, and——'

'I am glad to find you so extremely candid, Sir Robert,' interrupted he sneeringly; 'because, if you will only take the trouble of reflecting a little, you will find yourself much a greater villain than your humble servant. You, Sir,' continued he, altering his voice, and coming up fiercely to me, 'you are a mighty proper person to commence a champion for the cause

of virtue. I carried off Louisa, it is true; and, though I own the action to be highly criminal, yet is it by any means so poor, so paltry, so despicable, as your conduct, in assuming the sacred appearance of honour and attachment, to break in upon the unsuspecting confidence of her soul, and to blast her reputation? Her character, Sir, was as unsullied as the noon-tide beams of heaven, till you insidiously found means to steal upon her affections, and, in an accursed hour, like the basest of all scoundrels, infamously violated every law of hospitality, every sentiment of friendship, and every protestation of love. I have violated no law of hospitality, have broken no link of friendship, have burst no protestation of love. On the contrary, so far was I from wishing to betray Louisa Mildmay, that I was even willing to take her, stained and polluted as she was by your baseness, and did not hesitate an instant to participate in her shame. And shall you, the original author of all her misfortunes, shall you take upon you to call others to an account? Shall you, a villain of such deeper dye, stand up as an advocate for injured innocence; and talk of chastising offenders, who are, comparatively, spotless to yourself? Audacious scoundrel! let me rather, as infinitely the least culpable of the two, here take vengeance upon you, for all the calamities which have befallen a woman whom I doat upon to distraction. From the moment I first heard of your success with her, your very name planted a thousand scorpions in my bosom; and I would have sacrificed you to my rage, had not an indication of my resentment been likely to disappoint my designs upon Louisa. I therefore studiously avoided seeing you, well knowing the vehemence of my own temper. But the time is now come, and it is not a little of your blood which can gratify the greediness of my revenge.'

Melmoth, cowardice and guilt are inseparable companions. By the God of heaven, this harangue of Sir Harry's almost petrified me. I felt myself a paltry, despicable villain; and I actually believe, had not his sword been already pointed at my bosom, the justice of his reply would have shamed my resentment

ment into silence, and awed me into all conscientious acknowledgments of the keenest self-reproach; but my manhood was roused at the sight of his naked weapon, and to it we went, with as determined malignity as ever rankled in the breasts of men. Sir Harry had great command of his sword, and was prodigiously strong in the arm. For some time he thought to conquer me by a mere exertion of force; but finding this method ineffectual, he threw out one of those exquisite feints, which none but a master indeed should ever think of giving into. I do not believe he thought me so good a swordsman as I really am. However, before he could possibly recover himself, I made so rapid a lunge, that my sword was half-way through his right breast; and the violence of the thrust, together with the acuteness of the pain, brought him instantly to the floor. The noise which our combat occasioned, by this time bringing up the people of the house, I thought it highly necessary to think of making my escape, especially as they all cried out, 'He's a dead man!' and he himself advised me to set immediately off. I did so: and, leaving Edwards to follow with my baggage, I quitted Paris in less than an hour, and shall embark in a few minutes for Dover.

Such is the history of this quarrel. And now, Charles, hear me attentively. The moment you receive this, go to Lady Haversham, and tell her, that if Louisa and her friends are not entirely reconciled, and ready to receive me at my going over, I shall take an everlasting leave of England, and, perhaps, banish myself for life from any degree of converse with human society. Tell her, that what my angel has suffered, and suffered chiefly through my means, has rendered her so inconceivably dear to my fond heart, that a new disappointment will probably drive me to some instant act of desperation. In short, Charles, tell Lady Haversham every thing which is most likely to alarm her tenderness, or work upon her generosity. But why do I affront the excellent woman with a doubt of this unnecessary nature? Why do I suppose—But, Charles, I will neither talk of doubts nor supposes: the first are the greatest injury to the benignity of her heart; and the latter, I hope, is a violence to the justice of my own. Adieu, there-

fore, my dear Melmoth, and be assured; that, let my fate be whatsoever it may, I must be, as long as I live, your true friend,

R. HAROLD.

LETTER VIII.

LADY HAVERSHAM TO THE COUNTESS OF BLANDFORD.

MY DEAR LADY-BLANDFORD,

MY cares are now over. Bob is at last married to Miss Mildmay! and has turned out the very thing I always thought he would, a man of real probity and sound understanding. Your ladyship already knows what a variety of misfortunes attended my sweet sister, from the time of her expulsion from her father's till her departure from the Magdalen: so that all which is necessary for me to relate, is the reception which her family gave her, and the reception which she gave my brother.

I have already told you, that the moment her poor parents saw her letter to Miss Beauclerk, they wrote up to me, desiring me to take her instantly away from the strange asylum which she had chosen in her delirium, and promising to be in town within a week, when every thing should be settled to my satisfaction: for I had frequently told them, how passionately Bob continued to love the unfortunate young lady, under all the disadvantages of what we considered a scandalous elopement. They at the same time sent me up Louisa's little history, where I saw plainly enough, that notwithstanding the unaccountable part which my brother had acted, the dear deceived girl could not, by any means, erase him from her heart. A copy of this letter I therefore got that worthy man, Mr. Melmoth, to take for Bob's immediate use; and flew myself to the Magdalen, to which as I have been upon some occasions a benefactress, I have always access, and enquired for Louisa by her assumed appellation of Windham. The good Mrs. Dobson, and her sister, who have acquired so just a consideration with Louisa, were with her when I went in. The two honest women, it seems, are intimately acquainted with the matron, and that acquaintance admitted them, whenever they pleased

pleased, to Miss Windham. They were now sitting in the matron's room, when my appearance threw the little group into the greatest consternation. Louisa, the moment she saw me, started from her seat with a lightning-like rapidity, and exclaiming, 'Lady Haversham! Lady Haversham!' fainted instantly in my arms. Her two friends seemed prodigiously struck; but, nevertheless, exerted themselves so successfully in recovering her, that she was quickly in a capacity of conversing; which when they found, they proposed to withdraw, though Mrs. Dobson had a visible reluctance in her manner, that made me consider her with extraordinary attention. Miss Mildmay, however, would not suffer them to stir; but, taking each by the hand, presented them with *such* a grace to me, that I could not help kissing her heartily for the condescending dignity of the recollection. 'My dear Lady Haversham,' says she, 'you have, I suppose, seen my letter to Miss Beauclerk.' I answered in the affirmative. 'Why, then,' continued she, 'give me leave to present two of the worthiest creatures in the universe to your ladyship.—This, Madam, is the excellent Mrs. Dobson—and this the beneficent Mrs. Carter, whom I have mentioned in that paper.'

I rose, and saluted each of them; thanking them in the warmest terms for their generous attention to Miss Mildmay, and begging to know in what manner I could be serviceable to them on her account. 'O Madam!' cried Mrs. Dobson, falling on her knees, and kissing my hand with great eagerness, 'you have been long entitled to our utmost services, to the everlasting prayers of me and my whole family. Your ladyship's munificent hand, and your noble brother's, have been the blessed instruments of Providence, to snatch both me and mine from destruction. Your ladyship may remember the unhappy farmer Jenkins, of Salisbury, who was thrown into gaol through the inhumanity of a brutal landlord, for resenting an indecent liberty taken with his daughter. I, Madam, was wife to that Jenkins, and mother to that daughter. Your gracious brother redeemed my husband from prison, and gave a marriage portion with my child. Your ladyship scarcely heard of Sir Robert's unexampled ge-

nerosity, before you sent us down such a sum, as enabled us to pay off all our debts, and set us, once more, above the frowns of the world. We were utterly unknown both to your brother and you; and had no recommendation to your pity, but the merit of our distress. May the great God of heaven and earth shower down eternal blessings upon both your heads; and may you both feel that happiness a hundred times doubled with which you filled the hearts of both me and mine!'

Grateful, generously-minded creature!—My dear Lady Blandford, you cannot think how the tears rolled down my cheeks at this pathetick address. I remembered the name perfectly well; and it was the merit of my brother's behaviour on that occasion which originally rivetted him to the bosom of Louisa. You recollect the affair yourself, I dare say; for I believe I shewed you, as a curiosity, what a well-written letter of thanks I received from poor Mrs. Jenkins, immediately after I had ordered the remittance, which dwelt so strongly upon the good woman's memory. I raised her up, you may be sure, as soon as I possibly could, and told her that the young lady whom she had befriended so much, would, I hope, in a short time, honour my brother with her hand, as the match was what lay closely to the heart of both our families. She heard me with a look that indicated a wildness of satisfaction; and, bursting into a loud flood of tears, ran about the room, crying, 'Thank God! thank God! I have lived to be of some little use to my benefactors!'

You will undoubtedly be surprized, my dear Lady Blandford, at finding the wife of a poor husbandman expressing herself with such an air of elegance as Mrs. Dobson. The heart of the meanest peasant may be as sentimentally elegant as a prince's; but it is education alone which forms the delivery of our sentiments, and gives the customary characteristic of order and distinction. For my own part, I was so much surprized at her manner, that I could not help telling her how greatly it struck me. To which she modestly replied, that I was all goodness; but that her father was a curate in Wiltshire, who had several children, and not more than forty pounds a year. 'At the same time,

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‘therefore,’ continued she, ‘that he took every necessary care about the improvement of our minds, he took care to bring us up in a manner that suited with the narrowness of our fortunes; so that we became somewhat remarkable through the neighbourhood for our industry and our education. We all married men of humble situations; and hence arises the trifling disparity which your ladyship is pleased to observe between our conversation and our circumstances.’—But to go on.

Having shewn Louisa the letter I received from her father, she consented to go away with me instantly; but begged that Mrs. Dobson and Mrs. Carter would favour her with their company whenever she took the liberty to request it. The worthy women assured her of their immediate concurrence, and we parted with many tears on both sides, after I had left a fifty pound bill for the use of the charity.

Louisa was at my house about four days, when her father and her mother came to town. The dear girl, though she impatiently longed to see them, was however extremely terrified at the thoughts of their approach. ‘How,’ my dear Lady Haversham, would she exclaim, ‘shall I be able to look them in the face? There is one guilt which I acknowledge; and they have nothing but my own word to purge away the imputation of a second. Mrs. Darnel’s assertion may be taken as soon as mine.—Good God! how shall I look them in the face?’

They came at last; but with hearts prepossessed entirely as she could wish. They had seen some of Hastings’s favourite servants before their departure from the country; and, partly by menaces and partly by bribes, they came at the truth, which corresponded exactly with the relation of Louisa. Sensible therefore only to her late sufferings, the father and the brother entirely forgot their resentment on account of her original error; and the doating mother, who considered matters in a more tender light than either, was even ready to condemn herself for agreeing to the expulsion of so deserving a daughter, when she came to weigh all the misfortunes which that expulsion had fatally produced. In this frame of mind the three came to town, attended by Mrs. and Miss Beauclerk, when Louisa was in-

formed they were all below stairs. Sweet girl, how she trembled! how she wept! By the force of hartshorn and argument, I, however, recovered her, and she came down, leaning on my arm, into the back parlour, where they were assembled. She had scarcely entered the room, when the poor mother, frantick almost with impatience and joy, sprung from her seat, and fastening round her neck, strained her in her arms with a violence that almost bordered upon distraction. Louisa’s feelings were no less exquisite: she endeavoured to return the embrace with an equal degree of fervour; and both sunk lifeless upon the floor before either could give utterance to a single word. The colonel ran to his sister; while the venerable old gentleman seemed entirely employed about the recovery of his excellent lady: as to Mrs. Beauclerk, her daughter, and myself, we could scarcely afford them any assistance for our tears.

When the mother and the daughter became somewhat composed, the latter threw herself at her father’s feet, and begged at once his pardon and his blessing. The old gentleman, whose heart was long since melted, looked at her for some time with an eagerness of silent rapture, as if he was perfectly willing, yet totally unable, to comply with her request: at last, no longer master of himself, he fell insensibly upon his knees, as she knelt, and catching her in his arms, exclaimed, ‘O my child, my child!’ and sobbed out with such a violence, that one would imagine his heart was absolutely bursting. We therefore tore him up in a manner; but Louisa was rivetted on her knees, there was no prevailing upon her to rise. After her father was forced into a chair, she turned to her brother, who now hung weeping over her; and, while a large drop seemed fastened upon each of her cheeks, she cried out, ‘O Harry, what has my infamy cost you! Can you—but it is impossible—you never can forgive the wretch who has—But are you actually recovered? O what a wretch am I, to involve every body who loves me in destruction!’ The colonel replied to this in a manner equally polite and tender; and Mrs. and Miss Beauclerk now coming to claim some little share of her attention, Louisa began to grow more temperate, and received them both with the warmest tokens

tokens of a most cordial affection. In a little time we were all restored to ourselves, and the whole company were kind enough to become my guests during their continuance in town; nay, in less than two hours, Miss Mildmay, at the desire of her parents, consented to overlook my brother's behaviour; and a chariot was dispatched for Mrs. Dobson and Mrs. Carter, whom Mrs. Mildmay impatiently wanted to see, and who good-naturedly came to us in less than two hours more. But now, my dear Lady Blandford, prepare for something extraordinary.

Mr. Melmoth, whom we have long thought a mighty worthy man, and who for many years past has been indulging a most melancholy turn of disposition, on account of a wife and an infant, who died while he was quite a young man and abroad, is now the happiest of human beings: he has found that wife and that child, in the person of Mrs. Beauclerk and her amiable daughter. Two days after Mr. Mildmay came to town, Mr. Melmoth received a letter from my brother, with orders to communicate it instantly to me; and as Mr. Melmoth has a friendship of an uncommon nature for Bob, he never hesitates a moment to execute his commands. (But, by the bye, Lady Blandford, you will see what a narrow escape Bob has had in another duel.—God grant it may be the last! for if any accident should happen to him I should absolutely run distracted.)—Well, as I was saying, Mr. Melmoth came to my house after dinner, and, requesting to speak with me in private, produced my brother's letter, observing that Providence seemed particularly inclined to exculpate Miss Mildmay, and no less desirous of punishing those in an exemplary manner, who had been *intentionally* instrumental (that was his qualifying word for Bob's sake) in that young lady's distress. I took the letter with a trembling hand; and though I rejoiced at this undeniable confirmation of Louisa's rectitude, still it was with the greatest difficulty I could get through the account of the duel, which you will find inclosed in this packet. I was obliged to use my hartshorn twenty times; and I do not know that I could have read it at all, had not Mr. Melmoth previously assured me that my brother was in health.

When I had at last gone through the contents, I insisted upon Mr. Melmoth's going in with me to the company, as he was intimately known by character to every body, though with some he might be unacquainted by person. He accordingly complied; but judge, my dear, the universal astonishment, when, at the very instant of his entrance, Mrs. Beauclerk screamed out, 'Mr. Villars!' and fell back into her chair. Alarmed at the name, the manner, and the voice, he flew to her, and exclaiming, 'O my Nancy, my Nancy!' raised her up in his arms; while her beautiful daughter ran wild to her assistance, not knowing what to think of this extravagant surprise. Not to keep you any longer in suspense, my dear Lady Blandford, the company soon discovered, that Mrs. Beauclerk was the long-lost wife of Mr. Melmoth; and that some very extraordinary circumstance had divided them, without any fault on either side, for a painful series of years. What, however, appeared very strange, was, that each imagined the other to be dead; and that the information concerning the death of each was communicated to the other, by no less indubitable a channel of intelligence than Mr. Melmoth's own father. Mr. Melmoth's father, it seems, was a great East-India merchant, and intended to give his son a large fortune; but the young gentleman falling in love, and marrying contrary to his father's consent, the old man would not be reconciled to him upon any terms, but his taking a voyage to the Indies, and continuing abroad for an interval of three years. Mr. Melmoth, having no resource for the maintenance of his wife but his father's bounty, thought it better to accept of these cruel conditions, than to expose the woman of his soul to penury and distress: he complied, therefore, though with a bleeding heart, and accordingly set out in about thirteen months after their marriage, just as she had been delivered of a daughter. He had scarce reached the place of his destination in the Indies, when his father wrote over a melancholy letter, containing an account of his wife's death, and his child's; and advising him to think of enlarging the term of his residence in that quarter of the globe. This was an advice which the young gentleman readily pursued. After the loss of all that was most dear

to his wishes, England became hateful to his thoughts, and he did not return till two years after the death of his father; when he had the mortification to find, that the old gentleman had left all his wealth to some remoter branches of the family. Young Mr. Villars, for so I shall now call him, though disappointed in his expectations of succeeding to his father's fortune, was, however, in very affluent circumstances himself. During his residence abroad, he had acquired immense riches, and had been left by a friend no less than eighty thousand pounds to take the name of Melmoth. His property, when he came home, he chiefly laid out in the purchase of lands; and Bob has told me repeatedly, the value of his estates is a clear seven thousand a year. Yet, though he came home a very young man, and a very rich one, he still avoided mixing much with society. The company of women he particularly shunned; and employed himself chiefly in acts of beneficence and literary researches. I do not recollect by what accident my brother Bob and he became originally acquainted; but, notwithstanding the disparity of years, and the diametrically opposite cast of complexions, he entertained a very high esteem for Bob, and would sometimes, on his account, visit at my house, and be sociable. I always respected him: I saw what an excellent heart he possessed; and he gained my esteem entirely, by the almost parental solicitude which he shewed for the welfare of my giddy-headed brother; and see, my dear, how Providence has rewarded him. In the very moment that he was labouring for the happiness of other people, we see his own tranquillity restored; and find, that the benignity which induced him to mitigate the distresses of his friends, has been the principal means of removing all those distresses under which he struggled himself. Who, Lady Blandford, ought not to be virtuous, even from interest; since, if the consciousness of having performed a good action is not a sufficient reward, we are so generally certain of finding it highly to our advantage in the end? But now, to say something of Mrs. Villars. This lady, on the supposed death of her husband, was reduced to some difficulties for support; and, had not a distant relation unexpectedly left her a considerable sum of money, she, per-

haps, had found it necessary to work for bread. Old Mr. Villars would not advance her a shilling; and few are fond of cultivating a friendship with calamity. Soured, therefore, at the world, and absolutely wretched for the loss of her husband, the moment she found herself in circumstances, she retired to a sequestered habitation in the country, and has lived there ever since in a very private manner, visiting very few people, and continuing an intimacy scarcely at any house but Mr. Mildmay's.

Thus far, Lady Blandford, Mr. and Mrs. Villars's story seemed to account for their separation; but still there wanted some probable causes for old Mr. Villars's conduct, as well as for his daughter-in-law's assuming the name of Beauclerk. Most of us, therefore, honestly expressed our surprize, that the consideration of Mr. Melmoth's marrying a young lady without a fortune, could induce his father to practise so barbarous a deceit upon an only son; and Mr. Melmoth himself seemed astonished that his lady should, without any reasonable foundation, sacrifice his name, while she continued to dedicate herself so religiously to his memory. Mrs. Melmoth blushed, and only said she had her reasons.

'That she had!' cried out Mrs. Dobson, (who had been in the house some time, and now eagerly thrust herself forward.) I was amazed at the good woman; and, indeed, so was all the company; but as she appeared pregnant with something of importance, Mr. Melmoth entreated she would go on.

'I will, Sir,' answered she; 'but first of all give me leave to ask you a question or two. Pray, do you recollect one William Dobson, who formerly was a favourite servant of your father's?'

'Yes, very well,' returned Mr. Melmoth.

'And, pray, do not you recollect, that before your marriage with Miss Nancy Markham, the lady who now stands here, was publicly known, the same William Dobson one day told you, in confidence, that your father was in love with Miss Markham, and intended to offer very advantageous settlements, in hopes that the greatness of the proposal might obviate the difference of his age, and induce her

‘ to accept of him as a husband ? Pray, Sir, do you remember this ? ’

‘ Yes, Madam, ’ replied Mr. Melmoth, ‘ I remember it perfectly well. ’

‘ Why, then, Sir, the whole affair is nothing more than this. Your father, stung almost to madness, at finding himself cut off from the first wish of his heart, resolved upon the barbarous method of separating you, and making each believe that the other was dead. An assurance of this nature coming from a father could admit of no doubt; and you might either of you have entered into a second marriage, even before accident had undeceived you. In either case, the discovery of the deceit would have only increased your distress; and in the former, so long as it remained undiscovered, so long he was certain of making you miserable. This was not, however, the whole of his design. If he could make your lady entertain a belief of your demise, he thought it still possible for himself, at some opportunity, to gratify the horrid purposes of his imagination. Though she was his daughter, he still continued to love her; and once, I believe, actually insinuated a proposition that must be shocking to humanity. This was at a time when her necessities were extreme, and when he hoped the severity of her situation would lessen the horror of his overture. But let me hurry from this dreadful part of my narrative. When he found himself treated with the abhorrence which he merited; when your lady even threatened to expose him to the world, and talked of applying instantly to a magistrate, if he ever more came within her doors, he grew outrageous; he hired ruffians to insult her, and omitted no opportunity of slandering her reputation. When, therefore, she retired from London, she found it, I suppose, necessary to change her name, for fear of his infamous machinations. This was what he told my husband he was fearful of: and it is very fortunate the lady took that precaution; for I have been well assured, he made every possible enquiry to discover the place of her retreat. ’

‘ Gracious God ! ’ exclaimed Mr. Melmoth; ‘ and can there be such fathers ? — But pray, Madam, tell me

‘ by what means you have gained this information ? ’

‘ From the repository of all his secrets, William Dobson, Sir; whom, after the death of a former husband, once the object of Lady Haversham’s benevolence, I married. Mr. Dobson often told me the story, and severely reproached himself at times for continuing in the old gentleman’s service. But it seems he was a liberal master, and therefore William, I suppose, endeavoured to check the pungency of his reflections. Mr. Dobson, Sir, died about six months ago; and on his death-bed conjured me, if ever I found a proper opportunity, to make this discovery. I would not disturb the ashes of the dead unnecessarily: but the surprize which you expressed at your lady’s change of name affecting me in a very particular manner, I could conceal the circumstance no longer. Perhaps I have been presumptuous. I beg pardon of the honourable company; and hope they will excuse my impertinence, from a just consideration of my end. ’

Lady Blandford, did you ever hear so dreadful a story ? The barbarous — but let us not think of the monster; the bare idea of him curdles my very blood, and I shake with horror at the recollection of having written so much on so detestable a subject.

When Mrs. Dobson had done her story, every body endeavoured to shift the conversation; and none of us having yet felicitated Mr. Melmoth on his happy discovery of such a wife and such a daughter, we took this opportunity of doing it very sincerely. The worthy man was all extasy; while the two ladies sat between Mrs. Mildmay and Louisa, enjoying a thousand exquisite feelings at so fortunate an event, and every now and then testifying their satisfaction with an expressive flood of tears. Mr. Melmoth, my dear Lady Blandford, will be now quite another creature. His temper has already undergone a total alteration; and you cannot think how pleased I am at the impatience which he manifests, if he is but a moment absent from his new-found happiness. He loves his wife with an excess of tenderness; and indeed well he may, for a more excellent, or a more lovely woman of her age, I believe is not to be found in England.

His

His daughter too is as fine a young lady in person as ever I saw, and has a mind that even adds a lustre to her external accomplishments. Well, and what do you think has been already done about her? Why, her father offered fifty thousand pounds with her to Colonel Mildmay; and old Mr. Mildmay is so heartily for the match, that he proposes to make a double wedding of it, the moment my brother arrives in town. Four and twenty hours ago, Mr. Mildmay would not have consented so readily to his son's marriage with Miss Beauclerk: but Miss Melmoth's fortune has an irresistible charm; and fifty thousand pounds will be no trifling affair to support the coronet which he expects in his family. Yet I do not know but this reflection would be a little cruel to the good old man, if I was writing to any body but Lady Blandford.

Mr. Mildmay, his lady, and the colonel, (for Mr. Melmoth deprived me of two visitors) were now in town about five days, when Bob arrived at my door. The father and son were looking through the parlour-window, when he stopped, and both ran out good-naturedly to meet him, and insisted he would make no apologies for what was past. Faults, they observed, had been on both sides; and since he had chastised that villain Hastings, they could forgive him every thing. Bob, Lady Blandford, was in a most elegant undress, and really looked charmingly. Louisa, who was prepared to expect him every hour, was not much alarmed when he was introduced. She and her mamma were sitting in the dining-room, when he came up between Mr. Mildmay and the colonel. I led the van; and Alexander himself, in the midst of all his victories, I am pretty certain, never experienced one half of my satisfaction. You know how I love the recreant, and how I esteem the Mildmays. This happy reconciliation, therefore, almost overcame me; so that instead of saying any thing to Louisa on my entrance, I retired to a sofa in one corner of the room, and indulged myself in a delicious flood of tears. Bob, however, was all himself: with an air of the deepest respect, yet of the greatest manliness, he went up to the two ladies, and falling on his knee, held a hand of each alternately to his lips, without once breaking out into any awkward excuses; which, as

matters then stood, must have called back disagreeable images, and been little else in fact than so many insinuated affronts. Louisa was all sweetness and confusion, the mother nothing but sensibility and joy: both at length, however, insisted upon his rising; and he got up with *such* a grace—to be sure, Lady Blandford, there is not a finer young fellow in the kingdom; and, as he is now in so fair a way of being good, you must allow me to speak of him with my utmost partiality. In the evening Mr. Melmoth came with his lady and daughter. How did my generous Bob (I will call him *my* Bob *now*) exult in the happiness of his friend! and how did that equally generous friend rejoice at the happiness of my brother! In short, all our hearts overflowed with delight; and to render this delight the more permanent, we fairly married the two couple at St. George's, Hanover Square, the very next morning.

I have been so busy since the celebration of these weddings, that the writing of this letter has taken me up a whole week; and yet, long as it is now, and fatigued as I am with drawing it up, I cannot conclude without informing you of some farther particulars. Hastings's wound, blessed be God, is not mortal. A friend from Paris sends word, that it had a dangerous appearance at first; but that, by the skill of a very able surgeon, the patient will be soon in a fair way of recovering. Criminal as that man may be, still it is a terrible thing to have the blood of a fellow-creature upon our hands. But the vile Mrs. Darnel! I know not whether it is improper sometimes to be unconcerned at the misfortunes of the uncommonly wicked. That wretch, finding her infamous hypocrisy thus palpably detected, and fearing both the reproach of the whole world, and the utmost severity of the law, on account of her behaviour to Louisa, sold off her house and furniture, and, with the money it produced, prepared to embark for France; but in going down the river for that purpose, the boat accidentally overfet, and the miserable creature, together with the woman who had been the principal instrument in the barbarous behaviour to my sister, were drowned. As for Lady Harold's own maid, Sally, one of my brother's men assures him, she died in an hospital, of a dis-

temper

temper that naturally resulted from her crimes. Thus you see, in the short story of our family, my dear Lady Blandford, that vice is sure to be punished at last, however prosperous it may appear in the setting out: whereas virtue, let it be never so depressed in the beginning, is always certain of triumphing in the end. In the course of our little Novel, all the worthy characters of distinction have been made happy, and Louisa will take care that none of the inferior ones shall go unrewarded. Mrs. Dobson is to be her housekeeper, with an annuity of a hundred pounds for life, and the good wo-

man's garden is to be settled on her children in the country. Mrs. Carter's Sally is to attend my sister in quality of woman, and my Bob has taken a large house in St. James's market for the mother; which, when properly stocked and fitted up, he intends her as a present, and has no doubt but she will be soon able to give her daughter such a fortune as will get her a very excellent husband. God bless you my dear Lady Blandford! Take care of your health, and set me down as your ever affectionate

THEODOSIA HAVERSHAM.

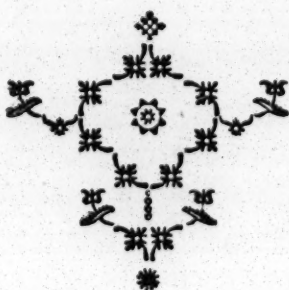
F I N I S.



L E T T E R S
BETWEEN
T H E O D O S I U S
AND
C O N S T A N T I A.

BY DR. LANGHORNE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.



L O N D O N:

Printed for HARRISON and Co. No. 18, Paternoster-Row.

M D C C L X X X I I.





T O

GEORGE COLMAN, ESQ.

TO live beneath the golden star of love,
With happier fancy, passions more refin'd;
Each soft'ning charm of tenderness to prove,
And all the finer movements of the mind.

From gifts like these, say what the boasted gain
Of those who exquisitely feel or know?
The skill from pleasure to extract it's pain,
And open all the avenues of woe.

Yet shall we, Colman, at these gifts repine?
Implore cold apathy to steel the heart?
Would you that sensibility resign?
And with those powers of genius would you part?

Ah, no, my friend! nor deem the verse divine,
That weakness wrote in Petrarch's gentle strain!
When once he own'd, at Love's unfavouring shrine,
'A thousand pleasures were not worth one pain.'

The dreams of fancy soothe the pensive heart;
For fancy still can new delights dispense:
The powers of genius purer joys impart;
For genius brightens all the springs of sense.

O charm of every muse-ennobled mind,
Far, far above the groveling crowd to rise!
Leave the low train of trifling cares behind,
Assert it's birthright, and affect the skies!

O right divine, the pride of power to scorn!
On fortune's little vanity look down!
With nobler gifts, to fairer honours born,
Than fear or folly fancies in a crown!

As far each boon that Nature's hand bestows
 The worthless glare of Fortune's train exceeds;
 As yon fair orb, whose beam eternal glows,
 Outshines the transient meteor that it feeds.

To Nature, Colman, let thy incense rise,
 For, much-indebted, much hast thou to pay;
 For taste refin'd, for wit correctly wise,
 And keen discernment's soul-pervading ray.

To catch the manners from the various face,
 To paint the nice diversities of mind,
 The living lines of character to trace,
 She gave thee powers, and she the task assign'd,

Seize, seize the pen! the sacred hour departs!
 Nor, led by kindness, longer lend thine ear:
 The tender tale of two ingenuous hearts
 Would rob thee of a moment and a tear.

LONDON,
 Nov. 10, 1764.

J. LANGHORNE.

ADVER.



ADVERTISEMENT,

AS this volume may possibly fall into the hands of some who are unacquainted with the story of Theodosius and Constantia, it is thought necessary to print it here as related by the *SPECTATOR*, No. 164.

‘ *CONSTANTIA* was a woman of extraordinary wit and beauty, but very unhappy in a father, who, having arrived at great riches by his own industry, took delight in nothing but his money.

‘ *Theodosius* was the younger son of a decayed family, of great parts and learning, improved by a genteel and virtuous education. When he was in the twentieth year of his age he became acquainted with *Constantia*, who had not then passed her fifteenth. As he lived but a few miles distant from her father’s house, he had frequent opportunities of seeing her; and, by the advantages of a good person and a pleasing conversation, made such an impression on her heart as it was impossible for time to efface: he was himself no less smitten with *Constantia*. A long acquaintance made them still discover new beauties in each other, and by degrees raised in them that mutual passion which had an influence on their following lives.

‘ It unfortunately happened, that, in the midst of this intercourse of love and friendship between *Theodosius* and *Constantia*, there broke out an irreparable quarrel between their parents; the one valuing himself too much upon his birth, and the other upon his possessions. The father of *Constantia* was so incensed at the father of *Theodosius*, that he contracted an unreasonable aversion towards his son, insomuch that he forbade him his house, and charged his daughter upon her duty never to see him more. In the mean time, to break off all communication between the two lovers, who he knew entertained secret hopes of some favourable opportunity that should bring them together, he found out a young gentleman of a good fortune and an agreeable person, whom he pitched upon as a husband for his daughter. He soon concerted the affair so well, that he told *Constantia* it was his design to marry her to such a gentleman, and that her wedding should be celebrated on such a day. *Constantia*, who was over-awed by the authority of her father, and unable to object any thing to so advantageous a match, received the proposal with a profound silence, which her father commended in her as the most decent manner of a virgin’s giving her consent to an overture of that kind. The noise of this intended marriage soon reached *Theodosius*, who, after a long tumult of passions, which naturally rise in a lover’s heart on such an occasion, writ the following letter to *Constantia*.

‘ *THE*

“ **T**HE thought of my Constantia, which for some years has been
 “ my only happiness, is now become a greater torment to me
 “ than I am able to bear. Must I then live to see you another’s? The
 “ streams, the fields, and meadows, where we have so often talked
 “ together, grow painful to me; life itself is become a burden. May
 “ you long be happy in the world, but forget that there was ever such
 “ a man in it as

“ THEODOSIUS.”

“ This letter was conveyed to Constantia that very evening, who
 “ fainted at the reading of it; and the next morning she was much
 “ more alarmed by two or three messengers, that came to her father’s
 “ house, one after another, to enquire if they had heard any thing of
 “ Theodosius, who, it seems, had left his chamber about midnight,
 “ and could no where be found. The deep melancholy which had
 “ hung upon his mind some time before, made them apprehend the
 “ worst that could befall him. Constantia, who knew that nothing
 “ but the report of her marriage could have driven him to such ex-
 “ tremities, was not to be comforted. She now accused herself of
 “ having so tamely given an ear to the proposal of a husband, and
 “ looked upon the new lover as the murderer of Theodosius: in short,
 “ she resolved to suffer the utmost effects of her father’s displeasure,
 “ rather than comply with a marriage which appeared to her so full
 “ of guilt and horror. The father seeing himself entirely rid of
 “ Theodosius, and likely to keep a considerable portion in his family,
 “ was not very much concerned at the obstinate refusal of his daugh-
 “ ter, and did not find it very difficult to excuse himself upon that
 “ account to his intended son-in-law, who had all along regarded this
 “ alliance rather as a match of convenience than of love. Constantia had
 “ now no relief but in her devotions and exercises of religion, to which
 “ her afflictions had so entirely subjected her mind, that after some
 “ years had abated the violence of her sorrows, and settled her thoughts
 “ in a kind of tranquillity, she resolved to pass the remainder of her
 “ days in a convent. Her father was not displeased with a resolution
 “ which would save money in his family, and readily complied with
 “ his daughter’s intentions. Accordingly, in the twenty-fifth year of
 “ her age, while her beauty was yet in all its height and bloom, he
 “ carried her to a neighbouring city, in order to look out a sister-
 “ hood of nuns among whom to place his daughter. There was in this
 “ place a father of a convent who was very much renowned for his
 “ piety and exemplary life; and as it is usual in the Romish church
 “ for those who are under any great affliction or trouble of mind to
 “ apply themselves to the most eminent confessors for pardon and con-
 “ solation, our beautiful votary took the opportunity of confessing her-
 “ self to this celebrated father,

“ We must now return to Theodosius; who, the very morning that
 “ the above mentioned enquiries had been made after him, arrived at a
 “ religious house in the city where now Constantia resided; and de-
 “ siring that secrecy and concealment of the fathers of the convent,
 “ which is very usual upon any extraordinary occasion, he made him-
 “ self one of the order, with a private vow never to enquire after Con-
 “ stantia; whom he looked upon as given away to his rival, upon the
 “ day on which, according to common fame, their marriage was to
 “ have





Place 1

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have been solemnized. Having in his youth made a good progress in learning, that he might dedicate himself more entirely to religion, he entered into holy orders, and in a few years became renowned for his sanctity in life, and those pious sentiments which he inspired into all who conversed with him. It was this holy man to whom Constantia had determined to apply herself in confession, though neither she nor any other, besides the prior of the convent, knew any thing of his name or family. The gay, the amiable Theodosius, had now taken upon him the name of Father Francis, and was so far concealed in a long beard, a shaven head, and a religious habit, that it was impossible to discover the man of the world in the venerable conventual.

As he was one morning shut up in his confessional, Constantia kneeling by him, opened the state of her soul to him; and after having given him the history of a life full of innocence, she burst out in tears, and entered upon that part of her story, in which he himself had so great a share. "My behaviour," says she, "has, I fear, been the death of a man who had no other fault but that of loving me too much. Heaven only knows how dear he was to me while he lived, and how bitter the remembrance of him has been to me since his death!" She here paused, and lifted up her eyes that streamed with tears towards the father; who was so moved with the sense of her sorrows, that he could only command his voice, which was broke with sighs and sobbings, so far as to bid her proceed. She followed his directions, and in a flood of tears poured out her heart before him. The father could not forbear weeping aloud, insomuch that in the agonies of his grief the seat shook under him. Constantia, who thought the good man was thus moved by his compassion towards her, and by the horror of her guilt, proceeded with the utmost contrition to acquaint him with that vow of virginity in which she was going to engage herself, as the proper atonement for her sins, and the only sacrifice she could make to the memory of Theodosius. The father, who by this time had pretty well composed himself, burst out again in tears upon hearing that name, to which he had been so long refused, and upon receiving this instance of an unparalleled fidelity from one who, he thought, had several years since given herself up to the possession of another. Amidst the interruptions of his sorrows, seeing his penitent overwhelmed with grief, he was only able to bid her from time to time be comforted; to tell her that her sins were forgiven her; that her guilt was not so great as she apprehended; that she should not suffer herself to be afflicted above measure. After which he recovered himself enough to give her the absolution in form; directing her at the same time to repair to him again the next day, that he might encourage her in the pious resolution she had taken, and give her suitable exhortations for her behaviour in it. Constantia retired, and the next morning renewed her applications. Theodosius having manned his soul with proper thoughts and reflections, exerted himself on this occasion in the best manner he could, to animate his penitent in the course of life she was entering upon, and wear out of her mind those groundless fears and apprehensions which had taken possession of it; concluding with a promise to her, that he would from time to time continue his admonitions when she should have taken upon her the holy veil. "The
" rules

“ rules of our respective orders,” says he, “ will not permit that I should see you, but you may assure yourself not only of having a place in my prayers, *but of receiving such frequent instructions as I can convey to you by LETTERS.* Go on cheerfully in the glorious course you have undertaken, and you will quickly find such a peace and satisfaction in your mind, which it is not in the power of the world to give.”

Constantia’s heart was so elevated with the discourse of Father Francis, that the very next day she entered upon her vow. As soon as the solemnities of her reception were over, she retired, as it is usual, with the abbess, into her own apartment.

The abbess had been informed the night before of all that had passed between her novice and Father Francis, from whom she now delivered to her the following letter.

“ **A**S the first fruits of those joys and consolations which you may expect from the life you are now engaged in, I must acquaint you that Theodosius, whose death sits so heavy upon your thoughts, is still alive; and that the father to whom you have confessed yourself, was once that Theodosius whom you so much lament. The love which we have had for one another will make us more happy in it’s disappointment, than it could have done in it’s success. Providence has disposed of us for our advantage, though not according to our wishes. Consider your Theodosius still as dead, but assure yourself of one who will not cease to pray for you in Father

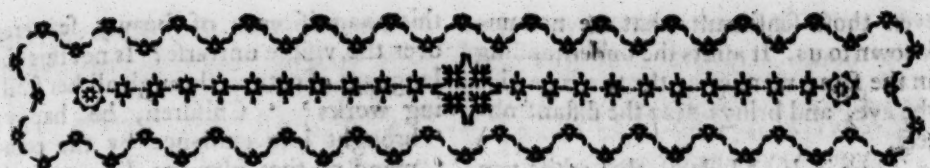
“ FRANCIS.”

Constantia saw that the hand-writing agreed with the contents of the letter: and upon reflecting on the voice, the person, the behaviour, and above all, the extreme sorrow of the father during her confession, she discovered Theodosius in every particular. After having wept with tears of joy: “ It is enough,” says she, “ Theodosius is still in being; I shall live with comfort, and die in peace.”

The LETTERS which the Father sent her afterwards are yet extant in the nunnery where she resided; and are often read to the young religious, to inspire them with good resolutions and sentiments of virtue. It so happened, that after Constantia had lived about ten years in the cloister, a violent fever broke out in the place, which swept away great multitudes, and among others Theodosius. Upon his death-bed he sent his benediction in a very moving manner to Constantia; who at that time was herself so far gone in the same fatal distemper, that she lay delirious. In the interval which generally precedes death in sicknesses of this nature, the abbess finding that the physicians had given her over, told her that Theodosius was just gone before her, and that he had sent her his benediction in his last moments. Constantia received it with pleasure: “ And now,” says she, “ if I do not ask any thing improper, let me be buried by Theodosius. My vow reaches no farther than the grave: what I ask, is, I hope, no violation of it.” She died soon after, and was interred according to her request.

Their tombs are still to be seen, with a short Latin inscription on them to the following purpose.

Here lie the bodies of Father Francis and Sister Constance. *They were lovely in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided.*



THE
CORRESPONDENCE
OF
THEODOSIUS AND CONSTANTIA.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

CONTAINING

THEIR CORRESPONDENCE, FROM AN EARLY ACQUAINTANCE TO THE
DEPARTURE OF THEODOSIUS.

LETTER I.

CONSTANTIA TO THEODOSIUS.



Is it possible that Theodosius can approve the philosophy of Bernier? What would become of Christianity, were we to adopt the following creed? *L'abstinence des plaisirs me paroît un grand péché.* A sin to abstain from pleasures! What can he mean? Is not this perfectly the reverse of all moral and religious precepts? Are not abstinence, and mortification, and self-denial, echoed in our ears from the first dawn of reason? Are not we taught to guard against the prevalence of pleasures in general, and to look upon them as enemies under the mask of friendship? Consider them in a religious light, and they confessedly alienate the heart from it's duty. The *lovers of pleasure* cannot be *lovers of God.* The *affections* cannot be *set on things above*, while they tend to earthly objects. Consider their moral tendency, and they will be found to vitiate and debase the soul. Selfishness, and a neglect of the social duties, are inse-

parable from the pursuit of pleasures. These are jealous gods, and demand from their votaries all the affections of the heart, all the attentions of the mind. They enslave the better faculties, and make the senses the tyrants of the understanding.

Surely the mind is too noble a province for such rulers; and, to me, the maxim of Bernier appears to be no less inconsistent with sound philosophy than with true religion. I fancy you will find some difficulty to support him in the opinion of

CONSTANTIA.

LETTER II.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

EVER amiable, and ever ingenious; pious in her enquiries, and modest in her conclusions. How delightful to accompany Constantia in the researches of truth and science! Clear in her conceptions, and acute in her expression; through the medium of her language, we discover more clearly,
B even

even those sentiments that are not unknown to us. It assists the understanding in the same manner as the telescope aids the eye, and brings near the distant object.

Thus it is, Madam, that while you call upon me to the decision of moral or religious enquiries, and place me in the dictatorial chair; after having invested me with the commission of a judge, like a skilful advocate, you in some measure qualify me for that office, by laying before me the whole merits of the cause.

When I praised the philosophy of Bernier, I had not indeed forgot that singular maxim of which you have taken notice; but I was by no means aware that you would seize upon this eminence, and from thence discharge your artillery both on the philosopher and his encomiast.

Well, fair friend! since Venus is armed for the engagement, and has already made her attacks, she must expect to meet with a Diomedes. But Theodosius, perhaps, will not be satisfied with his conquest; if, like the goddess of beauty, Constantia should retreat, wounded *only* in the hand.

Yes, my amiable moralist, I do approve the philosophy of Bernier; nay, I adopt his creed too, and cordially declare with him, *L'abstinence des plaisirs me parait un grand péché*. What is sin? Is it not to act contrary to the will of the Supreme Being? Beyond all doubt; where that will is known. Is it not evident that the benevolent Creator of the universe intended, and still intends, only the happiness of his creatures? This must be allowed from the consent and the appearance of his works in general. And is not pleasure happiness? It must be so, or the term is vain. If, then, the Supreme Being intended principally the happiness of his creatures, and if pleasure be happiness, to abstain from pleasure, is to frustrate the intentions of Providence, to act contrary to his will; which is, confessedly, the very essence of sin; *L'abstinence des plaisirs est un grand péché*. It is a capital sin to abstain from pleasure, since it must have been the primary view of the Divine Beneficence to communicate pleasure to human nature.

To what other end was this pomp,

this magnificence of beauty scattered over the visible universe? Is not this the language of nature, through all her smiling works? 'Children, be happy; brought into existence by the command of that glorious Being who is love itself, your inheritance is pleasure, and it is your only duty to cultivate it well.' Are they not, therefore, children of disobedience, who thus invited into the vineyard, stand idle in the market place, and vainly say, that no man hath employed them?

Hath God created a paradise, and will not man look around him to enjoy it; but, like his first parent, as described by the English poet, still pensively contemplate himself in the murmuring fountain? Shall he for ever seek his image in the waters of adversity; and shall the fair scenes of life be deformed through such a mirror?

Surely, to abstain from pleasure is a negative kind of guilt; since that very abstinence is a reproach to the eternal and invariable Benevolence!

From whom do we derive every natural desire? By whose wisdom were the fine organs of sensation formed? To whose bounty do we owe the objects of gratification? And to whose benevolence are we indebted for the capacity of enjoyment? Proceed not these powers and faculties from the great Source of all things? Was not each adapted to its peculiar function? And is not the neglect of these capacities a fault? Is not the mortification of them a crime?

By what means came pleasure into the world? Was it introduced by some malignant spirit? Did some daemon contrive it for the destruction of mankind? That could not be; for no inferior being could have power to pervert the faculties and capacities of human nature. In such a case the Supreme Creator must have been an imperfect being: he must have wanted the will to secure the happiness of his creatures; or, if he had the will, he must have been without the power to execute or establish it. Either of these suppositions it would be folly to admit. Pleasure, therefore, can only owe its origin to God, and its very name proves it to be of divine extraction.

And shall we refuse acquaintance with an object of heavenly descent? Shall we ungratefully bid the giver resume his

his gifts, or reproach him with a supposition, that he would affect us with propensities we ought not to indulge?

Yes, Bernier, you are in the right. The renunciation of pleasure must be a sin; not only actually, but effectually a sin. The mind that refuses admittance to such a guest, must acquire a gloomy and unsocial habit; be fit only for the regions of monastick dullness, where lazy sanctity offers a preposterous devotion to that Being, who intended that we should rejoice in and partake of a general and social happiness.

When the bias of nature is opposed, when her sovereign dictates are broken, man becomes incapable of rendering any acceptable service either to his God, to society, or to himself! To his God he is ungrateful; nay, he insults him with a devotion more becoming the worshippers of Moloch, while he supposes him capable of delighting in cruelty; of afflicting his creatures, by giving them passions which it should be a merit to mortify; and of tantalizing them, by requiring a rigid abstinence from every inviting enjoyment that nature suggested. To the interests and affections of society he becomes cold and indifferent, when, what should principally engage him to them, the social desires of nature groan beneath the yoke of undelighted abstinence. Upon the same principles he is an enemy to himself, to that being which was given him for his enjoyment, and which at last he shall render back to the Giver, with, 'I knew that thou wert an hard Master, therefore the talent that thou gavest me I have made no use of: behold, here it is again.'

O Pleasure! thou first, best gift of eternal Beneficence! Fairest and most beloved daughter of heaven, all hail! and welcome to sojourn on earth! A stranger thou art to every malignant and unsocial passion, formed to expand, to exhilarate, to humanize the heart!

But whither has my subject transported me? Have I lost sight of Constantia? That cannot be; for pleasure is my subject.

Yet possibly my amiable friend is by this time more than half displeased. 'Where,' says she, 'will this end? Has Theodosius conspired with Bernier to revive the school of Epicurus?'

By no means, Madam! The pleasure

we preach is not the offspring of chance, but the child of God.

The Epicurean doctrine of pleasure is selfish; this that we would recommend is pious. From considerations respecting the uncertainty of this life, and the improbability of another, the Athenian philosopher, if we may believe his biographer, Laertius, taught his followers, to pursue incessantly all that was called enjoyment. From reflections that are honourable to the eternal Providence; that conclude him to be the liberal giver of all that deserves the name of enjoyment, of the objects that gratify, and the faculties that enjoy; in obedience to his benevolent intentions, would we summon the world to the pursuit of pleasure, and convince it that the sun doth not shine in vain?

Nor will this doctrine, as my fair friend apprehends, be at all inconsistent with the pure precepts of that religion we profess.

For, after all, what is pleasure? Is it to be found at the table of riotous festivity, or in the venal arms of erratic love? Impossible! for these are the haunts of madness, of meanness, disgust, and folly.

Human Pleasure is of a delicate temper. She disclaims all connections with indecency and excess: she declines the society of untender Desire, and of Riot roaring in the jollity of his heart. A sense of the dignity of human nature always accompanies her, and she cannot admit of any thing that degrades it. Tenderness, Good Faith, Modesty, and Delicacy, are her handmaids; Temperance and Cheerfulness are her bosom friends. She is no stranger to the endearments of love; but she always consults her handmaids in the choice of the object: she never refuses her presence at the social board, where her friends are always placed on her right hand, and on her left. During the time, she generally addresses herself to Cheerfulness, till Temperance demands her attention.

Let us now, Constantia, enquire whether this amiable being merits the charge that you have brought against her.

Will she alienate the heart from it's duty? But how? Has it not already appeared, that she herself was sent from God, the best gift of infinite benevolence? It is only in the abuse, in the

perversion of the gift, that the heart can be alienated from it's duty.

The lovers of pleasure may, undoubtedly, be lovers of God. To be pleased with the gift, and not love the giver, would be unnatural and ungrateful. Hence the charge of the inspired writer, that some were *lovers of pleasure, more than lovers of God*. What was this more or less than the charge of ingratitude?

The *affections*, you say, cannot be *set on things above*, while they tend to earthly objects. Literally, they cannot; but the best devotion, that such an imperfect creature as man is capable of paying, is derived from his mortal feelings, perceptions, and enjoyments. When he finds himself happy in these, he is naturally led to adore that Being who gave them; to look up with gratitude to him, and so far to *set his affections on things above*, as he has reason to hope for a happier allotment in an improved state of existence. Thus far, even a regard to things on earth, may assist his piety, and encourage his hope.

Our ideas of heavenly objects are extremely abstracted from sense, and yet it is difficult through any other medium to extend the affections to them. It has been observed, with philosophical truth, by one of the sacred writers, that, *'If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how should he love God whom he hath not seen?'* I will borrow his mode of reasoning, and will add, if a man love not those gifts of God which he hath seen, how should he set his affection on those which he hath not seen? If he hath not been pleased with those enjoyments which the Divine bounty hath allotted him, as peculiarly adapted to this state of being, what moral prospect can he have of being better satisfied in any future state?

But you quarrel with the *moral* tendency of *pleasure*, and load it with the heavy charge of vitiating and debasing the mind; adding, that selfishness, and a neglect of the social duties, are inseparable from the pursuit of it. Has not my friend made a *misnomer* here, in giving the name of pleasure to Vice? Change the terms only, and the charge is just. It is impossible that innocent pleasures should vitiate, or that delicate enjoyments should debase the mind. It

is impossible that those social delights which soften the heart, should make it selfish, or exclude from it's feelings a regard for the happiness of others.

If we look into the minds and manners of men, we shall find that not the very abstemious, the mortified, or the sanctimonious, are most distinguished for social virtues. The reason, I think, is obvious: when innocent appetites and desires are retrained, the social affections languish under the same oppression. It is scarcely possible, that any man who admits of no enjoyments in himself, should be indulgent to those of others. We behold innumerable instances of this, both in those who cannot and in those who will not enjoy.

The encouragement of pleasure, therefore, cherishes the social virtues; and he who is of a happy disposition himself, will be the first to promote the happiness of his neighbour.

Yet, will not pleasures enslave the better faculties, and make the senses the tyrants of the soul? No doubt—if the enjoyments of the mind are excluded; but the soul has it's peculiar pleasures, which may and ought to take their turn; and if the intellectual appetites are gratified, as well as the sensual and the social, the province of the mind will neither be uncultivated, nor be subject to the usurpation of invaders.

Pardon me, Constantia! when I write to you, I know not when to have done! Even now I lay down the pen with reluctance—even now, with a sigh, I subscribe

THEODOSIUS.

LETTER III.

CONSTANTIA TO THEODOSIUS.

THERE is nothing more true, than that credulity is the foible of women. I have a violent inclination to believe every word you have said, as well your gallantry as your philosophy: nay, I can hardly bewail the ruin of my poor arguments; though I have the vanity to think, that the breaches you have made in them might easily be repaired. However, you certainly had the happiest address to introduce your doctrine by the hand of flattery. The understanding of a woman is by nothing so easily vanquished as by the artillery of

of praise. If it be to your purpose to weaken it, give it the compliment of strength. If you would blind it, call it brighter than the day. The praise of a philosopher is really a most dangerous thing; and it is not in female fortitude to resist it. Accompanied with the ideas of truth and gravity, it makes its way to the heart without opposition; and the sense and dignity of the speaker conspire with our natural love of it, to give it the sanction of sincerity.

Should I preclude all future compliments from the letters of Theodosius, and say no more than what is usually said upon such occasions, viz. that I could not deserve them; however true it might be, it would not save me from the charge of affectation: an imputation which of all others would be most dreadful to me! Frank-hearted let me be esteemed; and, though destitute of every other excellence, I shall not be the meanest of my sex.

But you see, my friend, I have given you serious, and, I hope, satisfactory reasons, why you should shut up the fountains of adulation; unless you think that they will give fertility to a barren soil. Assure yourself, I shall conclude this to be your opinion, if you pay any compliments either to my person or my understanding.

I find no inclination to controvert any of the principles contained in your last. They are all amiable at least, if they are not solid; and, possibly, it may be nothing more than the prejudice of a narrow education, that would withhold any part of the credit due to them.

Ah, my friend! for, surely, you are my friend, if any confidence may be reposed in human appearances; pity the ignorance of a hapless girl, I had almost said an orphan, unassisted and uninstructed!—Believe me, Theodosius, to your conversation I am indebted for almost all the valuable sentiments I have. You first taught me to think at large: you told me that liberty of opinion was as much a natural inheritance as personal liberty; that human nature had long groaned under the tyranny of custom; and that the worst species of captivity, was the imprisonment of the mind.

Ever to be remembered is that distinguished lesson, which, upon our first acquaintance, you gave me in the grove of poplars. You politely pretended, that

it was written by some other person, for the instruction of another woman: but I soon discovered in it the spirit and manner of Theodosius; and found it so well adapted to my own circumstances, that I could no longer doubt either for whom, or by whom it was written.

Notwithstanding this discovery, I must beg you will favour me with a copy of it; for that which you gave me has been destroyed, I believe, by the zeal and industry of Father M——. Adieu!

CONSTANTIA.

LETTER IV.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

BY supposing me to be the author of the following letter, you have laid me under some disagreeable circumstances. But what would you conclude, should I, on that account, refuse you a copy of it? Might you not justly charge me with that affectation which you so greatly despise? You shall have it, be the consequence what it will. Constantia commands, and Theodosius must obey.

‘ THOUGHTS ON THE IMPROVE-
‘ MENT OF THE MIND AND MAN-
‘ NERS, ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG
‘ LADY OF BOLOGNA. BY A MEM-
‘ BER OF THE ACADEMY DELLA
‘ CRUSCA.

‘ MADAM,

‘ THE first step that a young lady
‘ can take towards improvement,
‘ is to be convinced that she wants it.
‘ The mind is situated in such an ob-
‘ scure recess, and is so little the ob-
‘ ject of the senses, that it is a difficult
‘ matter to take a view of it at all:
‘ much more, to behold it in its true
‘ light. Hence, we are apt to believe it
‘ sufficiently furnished, when desolate
‘ and empty; and to think it properly
‘ cultivated, though it produces little
‘ more than the rude growth of nature.
‘ Better, however, is even that growth,
‘ than some artificial products. Bet-
‘ ter is the harvest of wild simplicity,
‘ than the rank and thriving crops that
‘ have been cultivated by the industry
‘ of folly!

‘ OF

• Of all the offensive weeds that are
• apt to spring up in a young mind,
• and to oppress it's better fruits, af-
• fection is the most destructive; where
• it takes root, the love of truth and
• nature perish unavoidably, and arti-
• fice and insincerity usurp their place.
• Qualities like these are so infinitely
• odious, so perfectly opposite to all that
• is amiable or deserving of confidence,
• that, if a woman had an aversion to
• being beloved, she could not find a
• more effectual antidote.

• Never, Madam, have I known an
• affected woman possessed of any ami-
• able or any virtuous quality!

• The Coccatrix is not unknown to
• you. Behold in her, then, a most in-
• structive lecture on the management of
• the mind? For the Coccatrix, with
• the best natural understanding, not
• uncultivated by books, is at pains
• to render herself the most odious wo-
• man in the world. Affectation has
• the absolute dominion both of her
• person and mind. Her words, her
• motions, her actions, her opinions,
• are all under the influence of affecta-
• tion; all receive it's ugly and dis-
• gustful stamp. Obscurely born her-
• self, the Coccatrix's passion is dis-
• tinction. Without any accomplish-
• ments of person, she affects the soft-
• ness, the negligence, the languish-
• ments of beauty. These, and in-
• numerable more absurdities, arising
• from the same principle of affectation,
• render her the contempt of your sex,
• and the jest of ours. Yet were ridi-
• culous manners the only effect of this
• principle, the Coccatrix might be
• laughed at and pitied; but the same
• insincerity, the same deviation from
• truth and nature which produces these,
• has other consequences that render her
• detestable: she is scurrilous and treach-
• erous; nor is this to be wondered at.
• A mind which affectation has alienat-
• ed from every natural principle of
• simplicity, loses at the same time the
• social virtues, and becomes indifferent
• to the interests and the reputation of
• others.

• Of no simple ingredients is this cha-
• racter composed. Forbidding pride,
• ridiculous vanity, insidious insinc-
• erity, virulent malignity, make a part
• of the composition of the Coccatrix.

• Characters are always the best com-

• ments upon precepts. In the Cocca-
• trici, Madam, you behold by what
• odious qualities a polished under-
• standing may be debased.

• For the improvement of the man-
• ners, therefore, something more must
• be necessary than the mere acquisition
• of knowledge; and this something I
• take to be the cultivation of benevo-
• lence and sincerity. An infinite num-
• ber of virtues will spring from these
• valuable roots. The love of human-
• kind will make you a friend to every
• fellow-creature; and, together with
• the approbation of your own heart,
• general esteem and admiration will be
• your reward. The love of truth will
• save you from affectation, and from
• all it's disagreeable consequences; sa-
• crifice at the shrine of Nature, and
• borrow from her your manners and
• sentiments, not from the fantastick
• humours of fashion. From her, like-
• wise, borrow your knowledge, and
• not from the labours of the schools.
• She will give you no narrow or illi-
• beral ideas of her great Author. Be-
• such writers, therefore, your study,
• as have made her theirs; such as have
• shewn the wisdom, the oeconomy, the
• prudence, the benevolent purposes of
• her works. The contemplation of
• such objects gives the mind a large
• and liberal turn, lays a foundation
• for the most rational piety, and re-
• conciles us to the allotments of life,
• when we behold the superintendence
• of a wise and benevolent Power over
• every department of the universe.

• Next to natural philosophy, the
• history of human-kind will merit your
• attention. Various are the advantages
• to be derived from this course of read-
• ing. A celebrated writer of anti-
• quity has observed, that he who is
• ignorant of what happened before his
• own times, is still a child. Before I
• had made a competent acquaintance
• with history, I never could read this
• passage without pain and shame. I ima-
• gined that the eyes of the great Ora-
• tor were upon me, and that I appear-
• ed childish before him. I am now
• extremely well convinced, that what
• he observed was comparatively just.

• Ignorance is the characteristick of
• childhood, and the mind that is un-
• informed, at whatever period of life,
• is still in a puerile state.

• From

‘ From the knowledge of past events
‘ and their causes; from attending to
‘ the œconomy of Providence in the
‘ external and internal government of
‘ the world; by tracing the progress of
‘ science, and the gradual improvement
‘ of the mind, we learn to form just
‘ conceptions of human actions and
‘ opinions; to make the best use of rea-
‘ son in foreseeing the consequences of
‘ principles yet unpractised; to enlarge
‘ and liberalize our religious sentiments,
‘ while we contemplate the Supreme
‘ Being in the capacity of an universal
‘ parent; and to see what moral per-
‘ fection the human mind is capable of,
‘ when man, in his savage and in his
‘ civilized state, is distinctly presented
‘ to our view.

‘ These, Madam, are enquiries wor-
‘ thy of a rational creature; worthy of
‘ that acute and penetrating genius
‘ which the liberal hand of Nature has
‘ given you!

‘ Make an adequate use of her gene-
‘ rous and valuable gifts. Despite the
‘ sneer of superficial foppery, that is
‘ ever jealous of superior sense, and
‘ dreads the knowledge of a woman
‘ on account of it's own ignorance.
‘ If you are not without hopes of being
‘ united to a man of an accomplished
‘ mind, qualify yourself for his com-
‘ pany. Let him not be obliged to
‘ consider his wife merely as a domest-
‘ tick, useful in her appointment; make
‘ him esteem her as a rational compa-
‘ nion, whose conversation may enliven
‘ the hours of solitude; and who, with
‘ a mind not vacant or unfurnished,
‘ may, like the householder in the gos-
‘ pel, *bring forth out of her treasure*
‘ *things new and old.*

‘ To what a despicable state would
‘ your sex be degraded by those mono-
‘ polizers of dignity and knowledge,
‘ who would debar you from both!
‘ What! were reason, and reflection,
‘ and memory, and every other faculty
‘ that is adapted to literary improve-
‘ ments, given to you as they are given
‘ to us, by a different author, or for
‘ different purposes? Mean fallacy in
‘ our sex, that would establish the worst
‘ species of tyranny over you, the ty-
‘ ranny of the mind! Groundless and
‘ illiberal fear in man, that he should
‘ lose his dignity in the eyes of a wo-
‘ man who was not inferior to him in

‘ sense! Is it the property of cultivated
‘ minds to see in an humble light the
‘ accomplishments of others? Is it not
‘ from such minds only, that they can
‘ meet the respect due to their merit?
‘ He who is afraid of marrying a wo-
‘ man that is not absolutely ignorant,
‘ gives a fair proof, at least, that such
‘ is not his own case.

‘ There are provinces, in which our
‘ sex may properly acquire and main-
‘ tain a superiority of knowledge, and
‘ in which it would not be worth your
‘ while to excel. There are, likewise,
‘ certain departments in which you
‘ should claim, unrivalled, the compli-
‘ ment of excellence; but the culti-
‘ vation of the mind should be equally
‘ the care of both, since Nature has
‘ given to both minds equally capable
‘ of cultivation.

‘ To an acquaintance with natural
‘ and civil history, you will do well to
‘ join the lighter and more amusive en-
‘ tertainments of the *Belles Lettres*.
‘ The study of the former will enrich,
‘ that of the latter will embellish the
‘ mind. From works of taste and har-
‘ mony, we derive a kind of mechan-
‘ cal virtue, and learn to admire what
‘ is truly beautiful and harmonious
‘ in moral life. The genius of poetry
‘ has a softening and humanizing in-
‘ fluence on the mind; and it's pathet-
‘ tick powers increase that charming
‘ sensibility, that enthusiastick tenderness
‘ and delicacy of affection, which ren-
‘ ders your lovely sex so justly the de-
‘ light and admiration of ours.

‘ I mean not, however, that by this
‘ kind of reading you should soften
‘ your mind, so much as form your
‘ taste, by admiring and attending to
‘ what is perfectly beautiful, in one of
‘ the finest arts of imitation.

‘ This art is so naturally adapted to
‘ cultivate that harmony, which the
‘ academies of old esteemed the essence
‘ of moral virtue, that I was always
‘ at a loss to know why Plato would
‘ have poets banished his common-
‘ wealth, till convinced it was because
‘ they hurt the interests of religion, and
‘ injured the dignity of the gods, by
‘ bringing them into the joyous pursuits
‘ of poetry.

‘ After all, Madam, whatever pro-
‘ ficiency you may have it in your
‘ power to make in literary accomplish-
‘ ments,

ments, forget not that the qualities of the heart are infinitely preferable to those of the head. Should you be unable, for want of assistance or opportunity, to furnish your mind with the treasures of antiquity, to acquaint yourself with the philosophy of nature, or to embellish your taste by the more polished labours of genius, remember that you still have it in your power to make yourself amiable, by a sweetness of disposition, by an openness of heart, and simplicity of manners.'

Thus far, Constantia, the grave academician. You will now, I hope, not be unwilling to take up the softer character of the Friend.—Ah! name, replete with tenderness! comprehensive of every kind, every faithful sentiment! 'Surely you are my friend,' did you say? Yes, Constantia, believe it! evermore believe it! If every ardent wish for your happiness, every active impulse to serve and oblige you; if the highest esteem, and the tenderest regard, may be allowed to constitute the most essential part of friendship, surely Theodosius is the friend of Constantia.

Yet, too generous in your acknowledgments, too liberal even in your ideas of gratitude! why will you attribute to me any part of your accomplishments? Alas! what am I? The little virtues I have—if any I have—I borrow from Constantia; and by continually contemplating her perfections, I acquire, as it were, a habit of imitating them.

Can I make a better use of these uncheerful hours, that I am doomed to pass at a distance from the friend of my heart? *Dans ces retraites solitaires*, I find no other consolation than what writing to or thinking of her affords me.

Why those needless prohibitions of praise? Why should Constantia forbid her friend to compliment either her person or her understanding? The former has no need of, and the latter is above all compliment!

What luxury in the indulgence of this growing tenderness! Ah, precious luxury!—perhaps, forbidden! Adieu! adieu!

THEODOSIUS.

LETTER V.

CONSTANTIA TO THEODOSIUS.

EVER generous and obliging; but, possibly, too tender! Yet shall I blame my friend for his tenderness? Surely, no—but why 'forbidden?' what does that mean? Shall the intercourse of friendship be forbidden? I cannot think of that—I cannot, must not lose the friendship of Theodosius.

You have my most grateful thanks for the academician's letter, which I will endeavour to secure from the inquisition of Father M——. The good man has a strange aversion to every thing that tends to open the understanding. Yet why would he keep us in the dark? Can it be of any advantage to him? In my opinion, the academician, (or, with your leave, Theodosius) has incontestibly proved the female right to learning.

This, beyond all doubt, provoked the worthy Father's zeal, who used to say, that all knowledge was invested in the church. Would to Heaven, that the church would be liberal for once, and dispense a little of that knowledge to an ignorant girl, who would be no less thankful for that than for its prayers!

Will you, my friend, forgive me, when I tell you, that I have frequently wished you had been in holy orders, and appointed my confessor instead of Father M——? I flatter myself you would have indulged me with works of learning and imagination, and would not have confined my poor library to Orations and Notre Peres alone.

Do not you think that the professors of religion hurt it's interest, by pursuing them too closely? Suppose they should now and then afford us a little respite! Suppose they should diversify our reading and our studies; should we not return to the attentions of religion with greater alacrity?

All these churchmen, however, are not equally contracted in their opinions. I have lately stolen the reading of a very delightful book, which I have been informed was written for the entertainment and instruction of the Duke of Burgundy, by the present Archbishop of Cambray, his preceptor. I have, more-

over,

ever, been told that the publication of this book was effected by the treachery of a domestick, and that it brought fresh inconveniencies on the prelate already in disgrace!

In what a miserable condition is human reason, when liberal sentiments will bring a man into disgrace! Adieu!

CONSTANTIA.

LETTER VI.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

I Rejoice that you are become acquainted with the new publication of M. Fenelon, the most amiable philosopher that ever Europe produced! His affluence of imagination; his glowing and impassionate sentiments; the attick sweetness and delicacy of his style; but, above all, that delightful enthusiasm, which, worshipping at the shrine of simple and beautiful nature, makes every reader a convert to her principles: all these qualities give to Fenelon the palm of philosophy among the moderns.

I mourn, with my generous Constantia, I mourn his disgrace; for it is the disgrace of my country. It is not for Fenelon we need repine. Reconciled to every event by the *addoucissement* of philosophy, is he not more happy in the confines of Cambrai, than he could be if, caressed amongst the number of favourites, he yet breathed the unwholesome air of a court? Zealous in the discharge of his pastoral duties, a friend to humankind from principle, busy in the exercise of beneficence to all orders, and all societies of men—who is so happy, or so great as Fenelon?

Like some fair star that shoots it's evening ray
Brighter along the dim wood's opening way;
So Fenelon, by favouring courts admir'd,
More feebly shone than Fenelon retir'd.

Think not, Constantia, that I am partial to this illustrious man, because I have the honour and the happiness of his friendship. The following substance of a conversation, that once passed between us, will convince you, that I have given you no flattering picture of him.

M. DE FENELON.

My regard for you, Theodosius, makes me wish your happiness; and if my longer acquaintance with life may intitle me to give you any advice on that subject, I will not be sparing of it.

THEODOSIUS.

Sir, you will do me the greatest favour. I have hitherto been a stranger to misery; and if you would instruct me how to preserve the happiness I enjoy, you need only tell me how I may deserve the continuance of your friendship.

M. DE FENELON.

On that you may at all times rely. But our friendships, like every thing else that we enjoy, are subject to the influences of chance and time. I will give you the best proof I can of mine, therefore, while I have it in my power.

The life of man has many cares belonging to it; but the first and greatest care is that of the immortal soul. We cannot be too attentive to the interests of a being that shall endure for ever; and to place any other in the scale against these, would be absolute folly.

THEODOSIUS.

My lord!

M. DE FENELON.

But you cannot want convictions of this kind. Yet there is one particular care respecting the soul which may not have occurred to you.

THEODOSIUS.

I beg to be informed of it.

M. DE FENELON.

Have not you observed the progressive improvement of the mental faculties, from the first dawn of reason, to the decline of life?

THEODOSIUS.

That improvement must be obvious to every eye; but some of those faculties seem to decline with life itself; the imagination frequently languishes under the weight of years; the powers of reason and reflection are, many times, almost wholly lost; and the memory is entirely effaced. So far the perfection

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of the soul seems to depend on the perfect state of the body.

M. DE FENELON.

As the body is merely the habitation of the soul, it's tenant can no longer occupy those apartments that are ruinous, or decayed by time or accidents. Hence some of the mental faculties seem to be annihilated, when they are only suspended; thus oftentimes we may vainly solicit the memory for an object to-day, with which it will voluntarily present us to-morrow. An intelligent nature cannot suffer from material influences; and therefore may exist in the perfection of it's powers, though those powers, for want of their proper vehicles, are not called forth.

THEODOSIUS.

I conceive the possibility of this, and am now impatient to be informed, what new care it is which has the soul for it's object.

M. DE FENELON.

As the faculties of the soul are continually improvable, and cannot be destroyed by what happens to the body, it is probable that in whatever state of comparative perfection they are, upon quitting this mode of being, in the same they will pass into another, which, though higher, shall be still improvable like the former.

THEODOSIUS.

What would you infer from hence?

M. DE FENELON.

That, next to the exercise of virtue, the improvement of the mind ought to be our principal care: for as the former will entitle us to an improved state of being, so the latter will qualify us for the enjoyment of it. From the benevolence of the Supreme Being, as well as upon the principles of reason and philosophy, we have a right to hope that the soul, when it quits the body, will not revert to that state of ignorance in which it appears to be, when it first informs it.

THEODOSIUS.

This is a very pleasing conclusion, and suggests to me a variety of agreeable reflections.

M. DE FENELON.

I have received great satisfaction from the contemplation of it. It is pregnant with many circumstances of comfort. When we have been toiling for the acquisition of knowledge, we may have the pleasure to conclude, that we have not been *labouring for the bread that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto eternal life*. It must be the greatest consolation to reflect, that the mental improvements we make, shall last beyond the grave; and that the treasures of knowledge we lay up here, we shall enjoy hereafter.

If we have contributed by our own writings to the advancement of science and the cultivation of the mind, what a glorious reflection does it afford, that these effects will last for ever; that the souls which have received new lights, new information from our discoveries, shall retain them in every successive period of being; and that thus we shall have contributed to the perfection of glorified natures and everlasting intelligences!—There is something ravishing in the thought! I am transported! I feel a godlike pleasure in the indulgence of it!

THEODOSIUS.

You, my good lord, who have contributed so greatly to the cultivation of the human mind, have a right to all the pleasures that such reflections can afford; and great, indeed, and adequate to the dignity of human nature, are the objects of complacency that attend them. But, for my own part, I have always thought, that every improvement the mind could make in this state of being, would be superfluous in another; that it's faculties would be infinitely enlarged, and that, at the command of Omnipotence, it would make a quick transition to the angelick nature.

M. DE FENELON.

For such suppositions, however common they may be, I apprehend we have little more or better authority than what self-flattery will afford us: it appears, and has ever appeared to me, more probable, that the soul should arise to such a state of perfection as we conceive of the angelick natures, by more regular gradations than are usually assigned to it.

* * * * *

Here

Here our conversation was interrupted by a letter from Madame Guyon, which while he good prelate was perusing with visible eagerness, I retired into the garden, and was led into the following melancholy reflections.

'How affecting it is to observe, that the most enlightened minds make the nearest approaches to certain degrees of madness or of weakness! Genius seems to be the child of enthusiasm; and yet enthusiasm is frequently the disgrace, the ruin of genius. The Archbishop of Cambray, the literary ornament of Europe, distinguished for the most pure, the most refined philosophy, is carried away by the dreams of fanaticism, and attends to the ravings of an insane devotee; for such is this Madame Guyon!'

After walking some time alone, I was again joined by the archbishop; who, with that calm benignity of countenance peculiar to him, resumed the conversation. What followed would stretch this letter too far.—Expect an account of it in my next. Adieu!

THEODOSIUS.

LETTER VII.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

M. DE FENELON.

YOU will excuse me, Theodosius; a letter from Madame Guyon always commands my attention. That seraphick woman seems to have obtained a kind of beatification; and I look upon an address from her as it were a voice from heaven. But I will not solicit your attention to a subject which has given occasion to so many unhappy disputes. I will pursue my purpose of giving you the best instructions I am able to give you, with regard to your conduct and your happiness.

Before we can tread the stage of life with that gracefulness and propriety which render every character easy and agreeable, it is absolutely necessary that we should acquire a considerable knowledge both of mankind and of ourselves. This knowledge is not hastily or easily to be obtained. We must have mixed with society, and have attended to the different forms that the passions and pursuits of men assume in different characters, before we can form any judg-

ment of them that shall be generally adequate. I have known some men of so keen a penetration, that they have been able to judge of characters almost intuitively. But hasty decisions, though they may often be right, may likewise many times be wrong; and they never ought to have the least weight with us in any thing that may concern the reputation or the interest of the person we so judge of. What I would observe is, that there are methods of acquiring a readiness of judging, and that such an acquisition must be of great use to us in the commerce of life. The only means I know of are those I mentioned to you—to attend to and learn the different forms that the passions assume in different characters.

THEODOSIUS.

And yet, my lord, may not an artificial deportment frequently render such an enquiry vain?

M. DE FENELON.

It may sometimes perplex it, but will seldom render it vain; even artifice itself takes a colour from the passions, and they may be read and distinguished in it's operations.

THEODOSIUS.

Thus you would instruct me to know men in general: but may there not be a more particular process of enquiry, where a more particular knowledge of individuals is necessary? I should be glad to be informed how I might obtain a thorough knowledge of the man I could wish to make my friend.

M. DE FENELON.

For this, different methods have been recommended, and different experiments have been tried. Some have had recourse to the chymical process of the bottle, and others to a fictitious distress; but both to no valuable effect. The first did not consider that a man deprived of reason is no longer a man; and the last had not reflected that, on certain occasions, a man might want the power, though he wanted not the will, to relieve the distresses of his friend.

If you would obtain a perfect knowledge of any man, it must be from his domestick character. Such a father, master, brother, son, or husband, as he shall be found, such a friend will he be. It is, moreover, in the minuter circum-

stances of his conduct, that we are to enquire for a man's real character. In these he is under the influence of his natural disposition, and acts from himself; while in his more open and important actions, he may be drawn by publick opinion, and many other external motives, from that bias which nature would have taken.

Were I once more to make choice of a friend, the first qualities I would look for in him should be sincerity and sensibility: for these are the foundation of almost all other virtues.

THEODOSIUS.

Stop not here, my lord, I intreat you; but tell me how that self-knowledge is to be acquired, the acquisition of which you have allowed to be so essential to our happiness.

M. DE FENELON.

There is no study so necessary as this; and yet, unfortunately, there is none so difficult. Self-knowledge, like that Hesperian fruit which was defended by the vigilance of sleepless dragons, is surrounded by so many powerful guards, that it is almost inaccessible.—Indulge me a moment, Theodosius, in my favourite province of allegory.—The most assiduous of these guards is Vanity, and at the same time the most artful. If you are determined to have access, she has address enough to impose upon you, and, instead of Self-knowledge, to present you with a different object, fair indeed, and beautiful to look upon, but very unlike the figure you ought to have seen. Pride stands, a dangerous centinel, at the gate of Self-knowledge; when you demand admittance, he seats you on a throne, and bids you look down on the crowds that surround you: you look with complacency, and return with ignorance. Should the arts both of Pride and Vanity be ineffectual, there is yet another redoubt to be attacked, which is defended by Self-deception. This is the subtlest of all the guards that surround the tree of Self-knowledge. In her hand is a waving mirror that turns every way, which so dazzles and confuses the sight, that you cannot possibly distinguish the real object you aim at, from the images reflected in her mirror. At length, with one of those images you return satisfied and deceived.

THEODOSIUS.

These, indeed, make a formidable guard.—How shall they be overcome?

M. DE FENELON.

Only by the assistance of Truth. As the machinations of inferior enchanter vanish upon the appearance of an abler magician: or, rather, as the *diableries* of infernal spirits are destroyed by the influence of a celestial; so Pride, Vanity, and Self-deception, fly from the approach of Truth.

THEODOSIUS.

Yet is it not, my lord, a matter of difficulty to engage this valuable auxiliary?

M. DE FENELON.

—Or, rather, to persuade ourselves to employ him; for there the difficulty lies: before he can be brought over to our party, he requires so many mortifying concessions, that we reject his services because we are unwilling to purchase them at so dear a rate.

THEODOSIUS.

Yet, surely, my lord—

M. DE FENELON.

They are but imaginary possessions that he requires us to part with. It is very true; and, for that reason, one would think the terms not hard. The dominions of Vanity, like the gardens of Armida, are purely ideal, and may be given up without loss.

THEODOSIUS.

And yet, possibly, we are indebted to this same Vanity for half the happiness we enjoy. Does not the whole art of happiness consist, principally, in being well deceived?

M. DE FENELON.

You have drawn me upon a rock that I wished to avoid. For the sake of Truth and Virtue, I am willing to persuade myself it is not so; certainly we are not deceived when we derive our happiness from the cultivation of these. At the same time I will own that, such is the weakness of human nature, there are a thousand *douceurs* necessary to give a relish to life, in the composition of which, deceit has a principal hand.

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But what the English poet calls, 'The sober certainty of waking bliss;' that must undoubtedly flow from the exercise, or the reflection, of what is real and substantial.

THEODOSIUS.

It should seem, then, that there are two sources of happiness; one from which the imagination derives fancied entertainment and unreal pleasure; another that, arising in conscious virtue, yields to reason and reflection a more genuine delight.

M. DE FENELON.

Evidently, and we may drink at both these sources: but we should make it our care, that the fountains of imaginary pleasure contain nothing that may tend to inebriate or disorder the mind.

THEODOSIUS.

Can they ever be attended with such consequences?

M. DE FENELON.

Too frequently they are. The imagination may be indulged till it shall acquire an habitual empire over the understanding. A man whose genius and temper are naturally warm and fanciful, may give himself up so entirely to the sweet influences of enthusiasm, that the powers of cool reason and discernment shall be greatly invalidated, if not wholly suspended.

Imagine, my Constantia, how this speech affected me. At that moment the affair of Madame Guyon occurred to me, and I wept to think, that my amiable instructor, in his own person, bore testimony to the truth of his observation.

The remaining part of our conversation, with my answer to some passages in your last letter, shall follow this without delay. Adieu!

THEODOSIUS.

LETTER VIII.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

I Concealed my tears as well as possible, while the good prelate thus proceeded,

M. DE FENELON.

Every principle acquires force and influence from habit; and if it be, as it certainly must be, for our happiness, to live under the dominion of Reason, we should take care to exercise and consult it upon every occasion. Thus it will acquire strength and efficacy, and our obedience to its dictates will become easy from habit.

THEODOSIUS.

The dictates of Reason are undoubtedly the laws of life. But, in general, my lord, how impotent and ineffectual! What avails her legislation, when the will, the executive power, seems not to be in her interest?

M. DE FENELON.

The will must be gained over by art, and management. Where Reason has not established her empire, she must do it by degrees; exert her authority in little and indifferent things, make mock-fights with the enemy, and have recourse to every other gradual and persuasive method, which are made use of to reconcile us to tasks of difficulty.

THEODOSIUS.

This method, indeed, my lord, is the most promising; but it seems that we either want skill or inclination to apply it. We always consider reason as imposing her dictates with a magisterial spirit. She seems to approach us with an air of rigid honesty, rude and unpolished as the dictators from the plough.

M. DE FENELON.

And did the same simplicity of manners, which distinguished the age of Cincinnatus, prevail at this day, she would be as successful too. Alas, Theodosius! to the loss of that simplicity, to our deviation from nature, we owe the greatest part of those evils whereof we complain. I think the precept most essential to the happiness of human life, is, 'Live agreeably to nature.'

THEODOSIUS.

This precept, my lord, appears to want a comment. May I have the happiness to hear the Archbishop of Cambray prach from such a text?

M. DE

M. DE FENELON.

Nature herself will here be the best commentator. She, as well as Reason, seems to have her conscience in the human mind, which fails not to reproach us with every breach of duty.

Alas, my friend! how often do we do violence to Nature, and cast her dictates behind! What artificial miseries do we lay up for ourselves, from the indulgence of imaginary wants! we are not content to search for happiness within the sphere of nature, it appears to be barren and insipid; we fly for it into the more specious and splendid circle of art; we are amused and dissipated in the search; but we never find the object we are in quest of. At length, weary and disappointed, we look back to the long forsaken walks of Nature, sorry that ever we deserted them, and ready enough to compliment them with those pleasure-yielding qualities which we should now be glad to find. But this last hope proves frequently vain: by being long accustomed to artificial habits, we have lost all taste for simplicity, and what might easily have engaged our affections when young, we behold with aversion in the decline of life.

THEODOSIUS.

I understand you, my lord. You would advise me to cultivate the love of nature, and to plan my life upon her simple model, while yet I am young.

M. DE FENELON.

I would, for the reasons I have already mentioned; because in her walks you will find the only genuine, the only home-felt happiness; which, however, you will be incapable of attaining, should you defer the application, till the habits of artificial life have deprived you of all relish for natural enjoyments.

THEODOSIUS.

The wisdom and experience of my venerable instructor would be sufficient to convince me of the truth of these observations; but I think I have, within the little limits of my own attention, seen the last confirmed in many instances.

M. DE FENELON.

It must be obvious to every person who

makes the least remarks on life, that those who have long lived in the circle of vanity, can never quit it. Not that they still find their account of pleasure in it, but that they are unfit for, and incapable of any other mode of enjoyment. What veterans do we behold busy in the pursuit of the most contemptible trifles! What a disgrace to human reason, to behold a countenance furrowed with age, distorted with chagrin, over an unsuccessful game! How disgusting to hear a matron, weighed down with years, discoursing like a girl on the frippery of modes! These are the unavoidable effects of pursuits habitually vain.

But when I would advise you, Theodosius, to live agreeably to nature, it is not alone that I would save you from frivolous pursuits and fantastick follies. Life is not to be left unactive; and, by escaping Seduction into the path of Vanity, you will of course take that of Wisdom. To do this, indeed, and to live agreeably to nature, are terms of almost the same meaning. For the end of wisdom is a rational and lasting happiness, which is only to be found in acting conformably to the purpose of our existence, and in treading in those paths of truth and simplicity, which nature has pointed out.

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Here my ever revered instructor ended his welcome lessons. I could have spent a life in hearing him, and thereby should have found that happiness which he taught me how to obtain.

Two ends are answered by thus committing his precepts to writing; which I have done without much difficulty, as they are yet fresh upon my memory. The pen is an excellent memorialist; and, while I am writing them for you, I establish them more securely in my own mind.

Let me now turn to your last dear letter, which is not yet three days old, though so much has been written since I received it.

Atas, my Constantia! (I address you as my heart suggests) this delightful intercourse may not be of any long continuance, notwithstanding your kind and tender solicitude, that our friendship may not be interrupted.

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The fathers of Constantia and of Theodosius, though their situation in some measure draws them into a specious interchange of civilities, are of tempers and sentiments so totally different, that whenever they meet I think I can discover in each a stifled contempt of the other. This gives me inexpressible mortification, as I am sensible that this contempt in both arises from motives equally insignificant; the one valuing himself on the superiority of his fortune, the other on the advantages of his birth.

Mistaken men! What are the distinctions that place one man above another? Not wealth or titles, certainly. Genius, wisdom, and virtue, alone, have this distinguishing power; for these alone are capable of enlarging and ennobling the mind, and of exalting the human capacity as high as it will go.

How long this smothered contempt will be suppressed by politeness, I tremble to think. Upon the least failure of respect in either party, it will burst into a storm; and, ah! then, my fair friend! then farewell this dear and happy intercourse of letters! Farewell the delightful freedom of our morning conversations! The sweet *sejour* at noon.

Sotto le fresche fronde

Del fresco faggio——

And the walk at evening through breathing bean-fields. Ah! enchanting walks, Constantia! when fancy, heightened by the surrounding beauties of nature, gave to all our discourse the happiest enthusiasm!

Should I not tremble, even at the possibility of losing a happiness like this?

But let us not afflict ourselves with distant evils! (O that they were far distant!) I will think no longer of them; but, quitting those tenderly-anxious thoughts, which the beginning of your kind letter suggested, will proceed to that part of it where you obligingly propose a question, and call upon me for an answer.

I am indeed of opinion, that the professors of religion hurt it's interests by pursuing them too closely; particularly, when they make a merit of unnatural and unnecessary severities. Yet this unfortunate doctrine has thrown it's galling weight on the easy yoke of Christianity, almost ever since it's publication. The Fathers, those Fathers in whom the church has placed such an implicit confidence, gave to that religion which was meant to enlarge and humanize the mind, the meanest and most contracted spirit and principles. Some disgraced it by the vilest quibbles* and misquotations; others loaded it with the most superfluous severities, forbidding the use of natural and lawful pleasures†; nay, one ‡ even goes so far as to declare, that the patriarch was deemed worthy of a heavenly vision, only because he lay his head upon the hard pillow of a stone, and what he did from necessity advises us to do by choice. One § has fallen into the most idle and absurd spirit of allegorizing the plainest literal narratives, facts, and precepts; another ||, with equal absurdity, adheres so closely to the letter, that he tells us the devil invented buskins to give God the lye, because it is said, that a man cannot add one cubit to his stature. In short, my friend, these lights of the church were in general the most miserable fanatics, ignorant, puerile, and cruel. No wonder, therefore, if those who consider them as guides, should tread in their steps. No wonder if they should cherish ignorance, folly, fanaticism, and every ridiculous effect of blind and superstitious zeal.

Undoubtedly, my fair reasoner, these misguided severities are ruinous to the real interest of religion; and it's professors, as you observe, have certainly hurt those interests by pursuing them too closely.

Slavish and broken spirits may thus, indeed, be imposed upon; but where is that free-will offering, that rational and liberal worship, which, founded in an intelligent faith and gratitude, does real honour to the Deity? Such a worship

* See Justin Martyr's ridiculous apologies for the cross.

† Athenagoras, Jerome, Cyprian, &c.

‡ Clement of Alexandria.

§ Origen.

|| Tertullian.

can never be paid, till the mind, rescued from the tyranny of an imposed belief, acquires the privilege of thinking and concluding for itself.

It would, therefore, be for the real interest of religion (if that interest may be allowed to consist in the promotion of a rational worship and an intelligent faith) that the mind should be set at large; and Father M—— would by no means lose his account in it with regard to your piety, though he should, as you say, give you a little respite, and suffer you to diversify your reading and your studies: for, what you observe is certainly just; and you would not only return to the attentions of religion with greater alacrity, but, by enlarging your moral and natural knowledge, you would acquire new and nobler principles of devotion, from beholding the wisdom and benevolence of your Creator displayed throughout the moral and the natural world.

But whether you can obtain this indulgence from your confessor, or not, you will by all means secure this letter from his inquisitorial eye; otherwise, the fate, not only of the letter itself, but of the writer, may be somewhat dubious.

I smiled at your wish, that I were appointed your confessor in the room of Father M——. If I thought you sincere in that wish, I should have very little inclination to be satisfied; for, believe me, I had rather stand in any other relation to you. In one respect, however, I should be gratified by this appointment: I should learn the state of your heart; and be assured I would govern it with absolute sway—that would be a circumstance worthy my ambition. Adieu, my amiable friend! and remember, that if ever I am honoured with the abovementioned appointment, I will make it my question, whether you were sincere when you expressed that wish.

THEODOSIUS.

LETTER IX.

CONSTANTIA TO THEODOSIUS.

I Have a thousand things to say; but where shall I begin, where end? My heart dies within me when I think of some passages in your last—what dread-

ful spirits of misfortune have you conjured up! lay them, for Heaven's sake, lay them again, if you have any regard for my peace or happiness. Shall I tell you that the enjoyment of your friendship is very essential to both? why should I not tell you so? Surely silence on such a subject would be a kind of dissimulation!

This free and candid acknowledgment is the only return I am able to make for all that industry of kindness I have experienced from Theodosius. Poor and inadequate is the reward, but what can I do more? Is it in my power to return those lessons in kind, by which I have been so much delighted—I hope, profitted?—Exalted moralist! amiable and excellent philosopher! what a loss would Constantia suffer, if deprived of your friendship! To you she owes every valuable sentiment, and almost all the little knowledge she can boast—whatever, in your kindness, you are pleased to distinguish with praise; all, all is yours.

—Onde s' alcun bel frutto

Nasce di me; da voi vien prima il seme.
Io per me son quasi un terreno asciutto,
Celta da voi; e'l pregio è vostro tutto.

How infinitely am I obliged to you for communicating so minutely your conversation with the excellent Fenelon! every word of that prelate deserves to be written in letters of gold. What sublime philosophy! What enlarged morality! What striking lineaments of human nature, and human manners!

But I am most charmed with the venerable man when he explains and enforces his precept of *living agreeably to nature*. I felt the truth of his observations without the aid of experience. And shall I appear vain, when I tell you that I have always retained certain sentiments that were of a colour with those of your noble friend? I have always thought, that not only the moral, but the religious happiness of human life, was best cultivated by that simplicity of manners and desires, which would always attend the love and pursuit of nature. Admire with me the following passage, which describes the happiness of the man who leads such a life.

E'l dubbio, e'l forse, e'l come, e'l perchè, non
Nol possan far, che non istà fra loro;

E col

*E col vero e col semplice iddio lega,
E'l ciel propizio alle sue voglie piega.*

I think the sentiment in the third quoted verse, of uniting the idea of a God with Truth and Simplicity, remarkably beautiful.

You see I have already profited by the academician's letter, and have not neglected the amusements of poetry and the Belles Lettres. I am willing to ascribe to this elegant course of reading, still greater advantages than he has allowed it, and am of opinion, that the best philosophy and morality is to be found in the works of the poets; for, with regard to the philosophy, I would gladly be of opinion with the English poet, where he says,

*How charming is divine philosophy!
Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo's lute!*

I would willingly persuade myself that the best poets are capable of instructing us in every part of useful knowledge; for I find a charm in their works superior to the pleasure any other mode of writing affords me.

Whether it is the power of harmony or imagination, that thus leads me captive, I am at a loss to know; whether it is the elegance of thought, the tenderness, or the gentility peculiar to poetry, that delights me most, I am unable to determine; but all together give me the most exquisite, the most refined entertainment. I wonder not that honours next to divine have always been paid to poets; and that those heaven-favoured geniuses have ever been esteemed superior to the rest of mankind. For my own part, if I should bring an offering to the shrine of any human being, it should be to that of a poet. Adieu!

CONSTANTIA.

LETTER X.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

THE approbation of Constantia is more than the reward of worlds, and her favour more valuable. The utmost of my ambition has ever been to serve and oblige her; but why will she ascribe to those services, to those poor

endeavours to please, more merit than they can possibly have a claim to? Yet it is no wonder if Constantia, who possesses every virtue in the highest degree, should carry her gratitude to excess.

I will not anticipate those evils which my fears, possibly too industrious, have so often brought before me; but, while this delightful correspondence lasts, I will sit down, with security, to enjoy the sweets of it.

Nothing could be more nobly conceived, than the sentiment of uniting the idea of a God with Truth and Simplicity. To deify and adore those amiable virtues, is certainly a very pardonable species of idolatry—if, indeed, it can be called idolatry; for we certainly worship the Supreme Perfection, while we worship his attributes, as it is only in those we can form any idea of him.

And yet it was from this source that idolatry, with all its troublesome and pernicious consequences, was derived of old. When the attributes of the universal Being were personified and exhibited by figures, the multitude, never capable of abstracted thinking, numbered so many gods.

The sentiment of your poet has, nevertheless, great metaphorical propriety; when divine honours are paid to Truth and Simplicity, much, certainly, is done for the service of virtue.

As you are professedly an admirer of simple nature, I will venture to send you a poem, which, on that account, I hope will be recommended by the subject. At least, I am sure, it has nothing else to recommend it; and let that declaration convince you, that I have not the ambition to aspire to the name and dignity of a poet, or to hope that you will bring an offering to my shrine.

WRITTEN IN A COTTAGE-GARDEN,
AT A VILLAGE IN LORRAIN;
AND OCCASIONED BY A TRADI-
TION CONCERNING A TREE OF
ROSEMARY.

ARBUSTUM LOQUITUR.

I.

O Thou whom love and fancy lead
To wander near this woodland hill,
If ever thushield smooth'd thy quail,
Or pity wak'd thy gentle reed,
Repose beneath my humble tree,
If thou lov'st Simplicity.

D

II. Stranger,

II.

Stranger, if thy lot has laid
 In toilsome scenes of busy life;
 Full sorely may'st thou rue the strife
 Of weary passions ill repaid.
 In a garden live, like me,
 If thou lov'st Simplicity.

III.

Flowers have sprung for many a year
 O'er the village-maiden's grave,
 That, one memorial-sprig to save,
 Bore it from a sister's bier;
 And homeward-walking wept o'er me
 The true tears of Simplicity.

IV.

And soon, her cottage window near,
 With care my slender stem she plac'd;
 And fondly thus her grief embrac'd,
 And cherish'd sad remembrance dear:
 For love sincere, and friendship free,
 Are children of Simplicity.

V.

When past was many a painful day,
 Slow-pacing o'er the village-green,
 In white were all it's maidens seen,
 And bore my guardian friend away.
 And wet was ev'ry eye to see
 The grave of sweet Simplicity!

VI.

One generous swain her heart approv'd,
 A youth whose fond and faithful breast
 With many an artless sigh confess'd,
 In Nature's language, that he lov'd.
 But, stranger, 'tis no tale for thee,
 Unless thou lov'st Simplicity.

VII.

He died—and soon her lip was cold;
 And soon her rosy cheek was pale;
 The village wept to hear the tale,
 When for both the flow' bell toll'd.
 Beneath yon flow'ry turf they lie,
 The lovers of Simplicity.

VIII.

Yet one boon have I to crave;
 Stranger, if thy pity bleed,
 Wilt thou do one tender deed,
 And strew my pale flowers o'er their grave?
 So lightly lie the turf on thee,
 Because thou lov'st Simplicity!

There is such a pleasure in the indul-
 gence of tender melancholy and pity,
 that lest I should deprive you of it, I
 will add no more than

THEODOSIUS.

* * The flowery branch of Rosema-
 ry, that accompanies this, was ga-
 thered from the same tree.

LETTER XI.

CONSTANTIA TO THEODOSIUS.

YOU must be sensible that you
 could not oblige me more than
 by favouring me with any of your poe-
 tical productions. Your village-maid
 is a picture of rural simplicity; as such
 I shall preserve it, together with the
 flowery branch of rosemary that accom-
 panied it, for the sake of the author.

Your last favour reminds me of an-
 other, which you some time ago pro-
 mised, but have now, perhaps, forgot.
 You praised the Latin verses of the ce-
 lebrated English poet we have so often
 admired, and called him the best writer
 in that language since the age of Con-
 stantine. When I complained that I
 was unable to read him in that lan-
 guage, you kindly promised me a trans-
 lation of one of his finest Latin poems,
 which, I think, you called a Pastoral
 Elegy on the Death of one of his Friends,
 whom he expected to have embraced on
 his return from abroad, but found that
 he had taken his journey to that distant
 country,

———From whose bourn
 No traveller returns———

Such a subject is capable of great ten-
 derness; and, at the hands of Milton,
 it could not fail of finding it. Let me
 have one more instance of your kind-
 ness, in the execution of your promise.
 Adieu!

CONSTANTIA.

LETTER XII.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

I Have made haste to oblige you; there-
 fore you must be as ready to excuse,
 as I have been to obey.

THE PASTORAL PART OF MILTON'S
EPITAPHIUM DAMONIS.

O For the musick of Himeria's maids!
 The strains that died in Archula's
 shades;

THEODOSIUS AND CONSTANTIA

L. T. R. XI



Severdel del.

Birrel sculp.

THEODOSIUS

Plate II.

Published as the Act directs, by Harrison and C^o February 9, 1782.



Tun'd to wild sorrow on her mournful shore,
When Daphnis, Hylas, Bion, breath'd no
more ;

Thames' vocal wave shall ev'ry note prolong,
And all his villas learn the Dorick song.

How Thyrsis mourn'd his long-lov'd Damon
dead ;

What sighs he utter'd, and what tears he
shed—

Ye dim retreats, ye wandering fountains
know :

Ye desert-wilds bore witness to his woe ;
Where oft in grief he pass'd the tedious day,
Or lonely languish'd the long night away.

Twice did the fields their blooming honours
bear,

And Autumn twice resign the golden ear,
Unconscious of his loss while Thyrsis staid,
To woo sweet Fancy in the Tuscan shade.
Crown'd with her favour, when he fought
again

His flock forsaken, and his native plain ;
When to his *old* elm's wonted shade return'd,
Then—then he miss'd his parted friend—
and mourn'd.

And go, (he cry'd) my tender lambs adieu !
Your wretched master has no time for you.

Yet are there powers divine in earth or sky ?
Gods can they be, who destin'd thee to die ?
And shalt thou mix with shades of vulgar
name ;

Lost thy fair honours, and forgot thy fame ?
Not he, the god whose golden wand restrains
The pale-ey'd people of the gloomy plains,
Or Damon's fate shall thus regardless be,
Or suffer vulgar shades to herd with thee.

Then go, &c.

Yet while one strain my trembling tongue
may try,

Not unlamented, shepherd, shalt thou die.
Long in these fields thy fame shall flourish
fair,

And Daphnis only greater honours share ;
To Daphnis only purer vows be paid,
While Pan, or Pales, loves the village-shade.
If Truth or Science may survive the grave,
Or, what is more, a poet's friendship save.

Then go, &c.

These, these are thine : for me what hopes
remain !

Save of long sorrow, and of anguish vain.
For who, still faithful to my side shall go,
Like thee, thro' regions clad with chilling
snow ?

Like thee, the rage of fiery summers bear,
When nature shrinks beneath the burning air ?

The lurking dangers of the chace essay,
Or soothe with song and various tale the day ?

Then go, &c.

To whom shall I my hopes and fears impart ?
Or trust the cares and follies of my heart ?
Whose gentle counsels put those cares to
flight ?

Whose cheerful converse cheat the tedious
night ?

The social hearth when Autumn's treasures
store,

Chill blow the winds without, and thro' the
bleak elm roar.

Then go, &c.

When the fierce suns of summer noons in-
vade,

And Pan repotes in the green-wood shade,
The shepherds hide, the nymphs plunge
down the deep,

And waves the hedge-row o'er the plow-
man's sleep :

Ah ! who shall charm with such address
refin'd ;

Such Attick wit, and elegance of mind ?

Then go, &c.

Alas ! now lonely round my fields I stray ;
And lonely seek the pasture's wonted way :
Or in some dim vale's mournful shade re-
pose—

There pensive wait the weary day's slow close ;
While showers descend, the gloomy tempest
raves,

And o'er my head the straggling twilight
waves.

Then go, &c.

Where once fair harvest cloath'd my cultur'd
plain,

Now weeds obscene and vexing brambles
reign ;

The groves of myrtle, and the clustering vine,
Delight no more ; for joy no more is mine.
My flocks no longer find a master's care ;
E'en piteous as they gaze with looks of
dumb despair.

Then go, &c.

Thy hazel, Tyt'rus, has no charms for me ;
Nor yet thy wild ash, lov'd Alpheisbee.

No more shall Fancy weave her rural dream,
By *Ægon's* willow, or *Amynta's* stream,
The trembling leaves, the fountain's cool
serene,

The murmuring zephyr, and the mossy green :
These smile unseen, and those unheeded play,
I cut my shrubs, and heedless walk'd away.

Then go, &c.

Mopſus, who knows what fates the ſtars
diſpenſe,
And ſolves the grove's wild warblings into
ſenſe:

This Mopſus mark'd—what thus thy ſpleen
can move?
Some baleful planet, or ſome hopeleſs love?
The ſtar of Saturn oft annoys the ſwain,
And in the dull, cold breath, long holds his
laden reign.

Then go, &c.

The nymphs, too, piteous of their ſhep-
herd's woe,
Came, the ſad cauſe ſolicitous to know:
Is this the port of jocund youth, (they cry);
That look diſguſted, and that down-caſt eye?
Gay ſmiles and love on that ſoft ſeaſon wait;
*He's twice a wretch, whom beauty wounds
too late.

Then go, &c.

One gentle tear the Britiſh Chloris gave;
Chloris, the grace of Maldon's purple wave;
In vain—my grief no ſoothing words diſarm,
Nor future hopes, nor preſent good can charm.

Then go, &c.

The happier flocks one ſocial ſpirit moves,
The ſame their ſport, their paſtures, and
their loves:

Their hearts to no peculiar object tend,
None knows a favourite, or ſelects a friend.
So herd the various natives of the main,
And Proteus drives in crowds his ſealy train.
The feather'd tribes, too, find an eaſier fate;
The meanest ſparrow ſtill enjoys his mate;
And when by chance or wearing age ſhe dies,
The tranſient loſs a ſecond choice ſupplies.

Man, hapleſs man! for ever doom'd to know
The dire vexations that from diſcord flow,
In all the countless numbers of his kind,
Can ſcarcely meet with one congenial mind!
If haply found, Death wings the fatal dart,
The tender union breaks, and breaks his heart.

Then go, &c.

* Milton ſeems to have borrowed this ſentiment from Gaurini:

Che ſe t' affale a la canuta etate

Amoroſo talento,

Havrà doppio tormento,

E di quel, che potendo non voleſſi,

E di quel, che volendo non potrai.

† The Tuſcans were a branch of the Pelasgi that migrated into Europe not many years after the diſperſion. Some of them marched by land as far as Lydia, and from thence detached a colony under the conduct of Tyrfenus to Italy.

‡ When Milton was in Italy, Carlo Dati was profeſſor of philoſophy at Florence. A liberal friend to men of genius and learning, as well foreigners as his own country-
men. He wrote a panegyrick and ſome poems on Lewis XIV. beſides other traſh.

perfection.

Ah, me! what error tempted me to go
O'er foreign mountains and thro' Alpine
ſnow?

Too great a price, to mark in Tiber's gloom
The mournful image of departed Rome!
Nay, yet immortal, could ſhe boaſt again
The glories of her univerſal reign,
And all that Maro left his fields to ſee,
Too great the purchaſe to abandon thee!
To leave thee in a land no longer ſeen—
Bid mountains riſe, and oceans roll be-
tween!

Ah! not embrace thee!—not to ſee thee die!
Meet thy laſt looks, or cloſe thy languideye!
Not one fond farewel with thy ſhade to ſend,
Nor bid thee think of thy ſurviving friend!

Then go, &c.

Ye Tuſcan ſhepherds, pardon me this tear!
Dear to the muſe, to me for ever dear!
The youth I mourn a Tuſcan title bore:
See † Lydian Lucca for her ſon deplore!

O days of extaſy! when rapt I lay
Where Arno wanders down his flowery way,
Pluck'd the pale violet, preſs'd the velvet
mead,

Or bade the myrtle's balmy fragrance bleed!
Delighted heard, amidſt the rural throng,
Menalcas ſtrive with Lycidas in ſong.

Oft would my voice the mimick ſtrain eſſay,
Nor haply all unheeded was my lay:
For, ſhepherds, yet I boaſt your gen'rous meed,
The oſier baſket, and compacted reed.
Francino crown'd me with a poet's fame,
And Dati † taught his beechen groves my
name.

Milton, when he was in Italy, had
the peculiar good fortune to find an age
of geniuses, and to be diſtinguiſhed by
their favour in a very extraordinary man-
ner. That poliſh which the young mind
receives from the elegant ſimplicity of
the claſſicks, he enjoyed in the greateſt

perfection. The considerable fund of that knowledge which he took with him into Italy, he had the happiest means of improving and perfecting, in those inspiring scenes where the finest writers of Latium first drew their breath. Those scenes afforded the best comment on the works of the Roman classics; and Milton shewed in all his Latin poems, that he tasted their beauties in the most refined degree.

The friend he bewails in the charming poem, of which I made these humble efforts to shew you the beauties, was the companion of his early years; and it is no wonder that he laments him with such pathetick tenderness: for friendships of that kind, which are nursed under the sunshine of young enthusiasm, are always the most vigorous.—Are they not, my Constantia?—I feel they are; for I am, &c.

THEODOSIUS.

LETTER XIII.

CONSTANTIA TO THEODOSIUS.

I Flew with your letter to our favourite alcove; and there with what pleasure, with what avidity I perused it, Theodosius need not be told.

I verily believe, that I am better pleased to be entertained than to be instructed; for I scarce ever received so much pleasure from a letter of yours, as your last afforded me; yet what can be the reason? It is not, certainly, that I am jealous of your instructive letters, as giving you a superiority; I cannot charge myself with so much pride. Nay, were I not sensible of that superiority, I must be stupid indeed: thus, however, I flatter myself on my penetration in being able to distinguish it, and on my modesty in being satisfied with it; and thus, like many other good people, I am vain of being free from vanity.

But all the instructions of my amiable philosopher have been seasoned with so much politeness, or conveyed in such an indirect manner, that while I had all the opportunity of profiting by them, I could hardly ever discern that they were intended for my use. If, then, your last letter pleased me more than any other, it is because I am idle and volup-

tuous, and take more pleasure in poetry than in philosophy.

Yet the genius of Milton had such a moral turn, that he seldom wrote poetry without writing philosophy; and even the pastoral you have so obligingly translated, is not, I find, without something of it. How beautifully does he bewail the lost advantages of friendship!

To whom shall I my hopes and fears impart,
Or trust the cares and follies of my heart?

And how truly does he lament, that man,

In all the countless numbers of his kind,
Can rarely meet with one congenial mind!

Young as I am, I have felt the force of this truth, and have made many melancholy reflections upon it, after the painful, ridiculous, trifling, and impertinent visits, I have been obliged to pay and receive, from the sillier part of my sex. Horrid tyranny of fashion, that imposes this upon us! What right can an equality, or a superiority of fortune, give one woman to rob another of her time, sense, and patience? I say, her sense; for the conversation of fools leaves a tincture of folly upon us. What title has dress or figure to lay a tax upon us for admiration? Do not they who expect this, insult our understanding? And are not those who pay it, the slaves of folly? O that the shackles of custom were once broken, and that we might chuse our society out of either sex, without censure or inconvenience!

Just before I received your letter, I was delivered from the most despicable and impertinent set of visitors that ever disgraced the name of good company. To me such visits are always visitations. To the abovementioned deliverance, you may, if you please, impute some degree of that extraordinary pleasure I ascribed to the perusal of your letter. This, I say, lest I should contribute to make you, what you have so often made me, vain; and thus, at least, you must acknowledge, that I outdo you in generosity.

I am not displeased with your observation, that young friendships are the most tender: no doubt they are; for the friendships, like all other pursuits and attachments of youth, have novelty to recommend them, passions to enliven, and enthusiasm

enthusiasm to cherish them. But, ah! my friend! (for once I will say, my Theodosius!) when novelty is no more; when the passions subside, and enthusiasm vanishes like a dream; will not the friendships, will not the attachments, that these principles produced, vanish with them? I will not fear it, though it should be true:

—non è prudenza
Ma follia de mortali
L'arte crudel di presagirsi i mali.

One thing, however, I will freely acknowledge, or rather boast of, that my friendship for Theodosius is, exclusively, founded on esteem. For this reason, I flatter myself, that it will last in all its present cordiality—why should it not? It has nothing to lose, when the charm of novelty is lost. Its existence by no means depends upon the passions; it has, therefore, nothing to apprehend when they languish or decline. It derives not its support from enthusiasm, and, consequently, cannot suffer when enthusiasm dies away.

While thus I comfort, I hope I do not deceive myself. But, should even that be the case, let your sagacity for once give way to your compassion, and do not deceive me. This is, perhaps, the only instance in which I could be satisfied with myself, for declining the report of truth.

Observe, however, that I expect you will, with the utmost candour and ingenuity, resolve some parts of my doubts, and tell me freely, whether those young friendships which are heightened by novelty, by the passions, and enthusiasm, will not inevitably perish with those sources that support them.

You see I have been at pains to induce you to declare your sentiments on this subject; since I have removed the principal objection that might have occurred to you, by declaring, that my friendship for you cannot be affected by the argument. Adieu!

CONSTANTIA.

LETTER XIV.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

THOUGH there is nothing in which Constantia has not a right to command her friend, and though, in

every thing, it is his pride and pleasure to obey her; yet he will own, that he goes unwillingly about the task she has appointed him.

Ah! my dear, my amiable moralist! It is frequently the happiness of man to shut his eyes against the infirmities of his nature! In those circumstances, where the knowledge of his weakness cannot save him from some real evil, that knowledge is of less value than ignorance.

The benevolent purposes of Providence have concealed the future from us, that we may not be interrupted in the enjoyment of the present; and it is, in many cases, necessary to our happiness, that we should imitate this economy of the Supreme Wisdom, and embrace those innocent pleasures which the several periods of life may afford us, without enquiring too officiously into their causes or events, and without being too solicitous about their duration.

Many, possibly, of our pleasures, many, I am sure, of our amusements, spring from such sources, as, upon enquiry, would be found to do little honour to a creature distinguished by reason. Their tendency, at the same time, is frequently as insignificant as their cause, and both are unworthy of a serious enquiry.

There are, indeed, enjoyments of a higher nature that may better deserve our attention; and yet, to enquire into the probability of their duration, might contribute very little to our happiness.

Such, in particular, are the connections of friendship. These are the property of man, and must, therefore, be frail, changeable, and uncertain, like himself. It must, consequently, be for his ease, to sit down unapprehensive to enjoy them, without meditating on all the possible variety of evils to which they must be exposed from a change of sentiments and inclinations, and from the several contingencies of chance and time.

It is into the fate of young friendships, my Constantia, that you would lead my enquiries. These, indeed, are not the least unworthy of our attention; for youth is the season both of friendship and of virtue. If to a disposition naturally not unsocial, we have added the advantages of a liberal education, we come into the business and society of life, in general, better

and

and happier creatures than we are when we leave it.

We step into the world with liberal sentiments, and benevolent affections; but the experimental knowledge of men contracts the former, and starves the latter: insomuch, that he must be possessed of a disposition more than ordinarily humane, who does not in some degree become a misanthropist before he dies. I may go farther, and add, that he must have uncommon virtue and greatness of mind, who, with unblemished manners, and uncontracted sentiments, can sail with such a corrupted crew down the current of life.

Man is, in spite of all his reason, an imitative creature; and what he has been long accustomed to observe in others, he will, with difficulty, forbear to admit in himself. By habit we may bring ourselves to behold deformity without disgust; and by being long conversant in scenes of enmity and insincerity, the love of truth and humankind will insensibly decay.

As youth, therefore, is the season of sincerity and benevolence, it must, of consequence, be the most promising season of friendship; for those virtues are it's best and surest foundation.

We love a benevolent man for our own sakes, and a sincere man for the sake of his sincerity. Esteem for ever attends the union of these; that esteem which my Constantia has done me the honour to acknowledge as the source of her friendship!

Thus, my fair casuist, you see we have a sufficient foundation whereon to erect an early friendship, exclusive of novelty, the passions, and enthusiasm; and we may justly conclude, therefore, that such a friendship may exist, though all such auxiliaries should vanish or decay.

Yet while these last, they undoubtedly yield us a more high-set pleasure, as well in friendship, as in every other enjoyment.

Nevertheless, I know not whether much ought to be ascribed to novelty; which, in the cup of friendship, is certainly the very worst ingredient. Possibly it may, for a while, give a poignancy to the taste, but the mellowing power of time, produces a much better and more agreeable flavour.

The prevalence and activity of the passions, keep up that lively zest and

ardour of affection, which add to the readiness of confidence, and are productive of a thousand agreeable sensations.

Enthusiasm has an effect on friendship proportionable to it's influence on love. It heightens it with the glowing sentiments of imagination, and embellishes it's real advantages with the visionary charms of fancy and intellectual refinement!

Yet when these shall depart with departing youth; while sincerity and benevolence remain, friendship shall remain with them. A reflection, which affords me the highest consolation! as I am convinced that, in consequence of those principles, Constantia cannot cease to be the friend of

THEODOSIUS.

LETTER XV.

CONSTANTIA TO THEODOSIUS.

WHAT a letter! my friend. If you have drawn a true picture of human nature, and if the knowledge of the world be really attended with the consequences you mention, who would not live in ignorance? Ah, Theodosius! what fears, what uneasiness, has your letter awakened! Better, indeed, my philosopher, had you suffered me to continue in ignorance! Better, and kinder, had you permitted me to enjoy my visionary dream of the duration and improvement of human virtue! Ah! too penetrating friend! Too ingenious in the discovery of that weakness it would have been happier to hide! You were sensible of this truth; and why would you gratify my impertinent curiosity, only to make me miserable? To give melancholy and mortifying ideas of that life in which my lot has fallen!

Yet surely, Theodosius, the sweet affections of benevolence will not wear away with youth. If the commerce of the world doth not corrupt the heart, surely, it will still have room for so delightful a guest. I declare, that, without one womanish fear, I would part with my being, rather than hold it on any other terms.

But what superfluous apprehensions do I entertain? This dreadful shipwreck can

can only happen on the tempestuous ocean of the world; my bark, I am determined, shall not be exposed to such ruin. Safely shall it steer into some quiet harbour, and rest secure from storms and tempests.

Seriously and plainly, my friend, you have given me such ideas of mixing with the world, and of the inconveniences which attend it, that I, who can boast no superior fortitude, conclude it must be my happiness to live in solitary obscurity. There I can embrace your good prelate's precept, and live agreeably to nature. There I shall be free from the impertinence of folly, and the censoriousness of envy. My precious hours will not be sacrificed to triflers; I shall employ them in studies worthy of a rational creature.

O Theodosius! for those delightful moments that shall glide away on the halcyon wings of peace and tranquillity: for those dear uninterrupted days of letters and leisure, when the mind may riot in intellectual festivity; and, free from every low, every vulgar and debasing care, may acquire that dignity and knowledge which shall properly recommend it to some higher state of existence!

What luxury is in the thought! even now I anticipate the happiness I describe. Even now, in imagination, I enjoy those easy pleasures, that independence of mind and body, which solitude and liberty must afford. I look back on Theodosius bustling in the world, pity him, pray for him, and tremble for his virtue. Adieu! Adieu!

CONSTANTIA.

LETTER XVI.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

E ENJOY thy dream, dear and amiable enthusiast! Enjoy thy visionary scene! To rouse thee from those delightful reveries, to break those fancy-favoured slumbers, would be cruel, if not impious. Such, and so expressed, were my sentiments, on perusing your last dear letter. But tenderness must give place to truth; at least, in a circumstance so important, as that of laying down a plan of life.

There is scarce any thing in which the mind is so apt to mistake its true interest, as in projects of future happiness. It is impossible to know how we shall bear those stations or circumstances, which we have only contemplated at an unaffecting distance; and yet, with an assurance that does more honour to our courage than our discretion, we venture to conclude, that those appointments or schemes of life to which we are perfectly strangers, would infallibly compleat our felicity.

In the mean time, we never consider, that new stations, and appointments to which we have not been accustomed, must necessarily take us out of our usual train of sentiments, actions, and attentions. This, however, will make us uneasy; for change, as Numa observed, when he was invited to the kingdom of Rome, is always an evil, and we never feel it more sensibly than in the manner and œconomy of life.

With respect to your scheme of living secluded from the world, I should have condemned it with the short censure of a smile, had I not paid so much deference to your reason and judgment, as to conclude, that those ought to be appealed to on every argument that might relate to your sentiments and resolutions,

Will my beautiful friend forgive me, then, if I suppose that judgment to have been bribed by enthusiasm, when she concluded that, by living alone, she should *live agreeably to nature*?

I am sensible, Madam, that by this you meant no more than, that such a mode of life would exempt you from those external temptations, those idle luxuries and follies, which are apt to make us deviate from the paths of truth and simplicity. But did you consider, that to live alone, is to live contrary to nature? A state of solitude, is not the natural state of man. The arguments I should make use of to prove this are old and obvious. That I may be less unentertaining, therefore, while I mean to set before you the inconveniences attending your scheme of life, I will give you a short account of a lady of my own family, who formed the same resolutions, and put them in practice.

Thus her story is related, in a manuscript still preserved among the family papers.

Eudocia,

Eudocia, an only daughter, was bred up under the auspices of Altheria, a lady equally distinguished by her piety as a christian, and her affection as a parent. The temper and genius of the daughter were naturally warm and susceptible: the offices and duties of religion had habitually inspired her with such a zealous and fervent devotion, that she seemed to have no happiness that did not flow from those exercises and attentions which religion required.

Her knowledge of books was little, of human nature less. She had, notwithstanding, conceived an infinite contempt for that world to which she was utterly a stranger, and concluded, that to enter into the interests and engagements of society, would be a voluntary sacrifice to vice and folly.

Eudocia was, in natural good sense, beauty, and a sweetness of disposition, equalled by few women of her time. These qualities engaged the affections of Alphenor, a gentleman whose genius and penetration gave him a kind of intuitive knowledge of the human heart.

He concluded, that every attempt to introduce Eudocia to the world, or to establish the social life in her good opinion, would be vain. He knew that it would be fruitless to argue with her on the pleasures she had never known, and the miseries she had never experienced. He therefore did not expatiate either on the advantages of society, or the inconveniences of solitude; for such had been the condition of Eudocia's life, that as yet she was in a great measure a stranger to both.

Upon the death of her parents, which happened before she had attained her twenty-fifth year, her fortune and manner of life were at her own disposal. She now determined to put in execution a scheme which she had long meditated. It was to retire, but not into a convent. A spirit of liberty had always saved her from that sacrifice, however industriously solicited by the emissaries of the church, or encouraged by selfish relations. She was possessed of an estate, situated in a very retired part of the province of Compeigne; and there it

was that she had determined to live sequestered from the world, with no other society than an aged confessor and necessary domesticks. Of the last she made a very few, and those females, sufficient.

At this crisis it might have been expected, that Alphenor would have used his utmost address to dissuade her from her purpose. By no means. On the contrary, he encouraged her in her resolution, applauded the piety of her purpose, and expatiated on the happiness of solitary sanctity. He assumed not the least of the lover's character, but that of the religious friend.

By this means he gained one point, which he had used all his industry, all his art to obtain. He had Eudocia's permission to pay her one visit at the end of three months after her retirement; a favour which was allowed to none beside, either of her friends or acquaintance, and which Alphenor himself, though through the mediation of religion, had scarce address sufficient to obtain.

Eudocia retired. She approached the confines of her estate with raptures, and paid a kind of idolatrous worship to the venerable groves that surrounded her habitation.

"Hail," she cried, "ye innocent and happy foresters! ye shall at once be the witnesses and the guardians of my repose. Enjoy your vegetable existence, secure from the cruelties and the ravages of man! I have fled from the evils of society, to enjoy peace and innocence with you; my undesigning friends! my blameless companions! often shall I associate with you, and repose under the kind protection of your shade."

With the same kind of enthusiastic pleasure she walked through the several apartments of her house, consecrating each with a kind of petitionary ejaculation.

For the first week of her retirement, she found sufficient employment in the economy of her family, and the distribution of their several offices to her domesticks. The second she devoted wholly to religious exercises and the raptures of devotion.

* * * * *

E

I have

I have been interrupted, and you will not at present be troubled with any farther account of my pious ancestor. Adieu!

THEODOSIUS.

LETTER XVII.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

*** **B**UT whatever is rapturous cannot last long: those exercises that lift the mind above its usual pitch, if too frequently or too long indulged, will at length either totally destroy it, or deprive it of that sobriety, which is necessary for the preservation of its due poise.

Nature seems, in kindness, to have guarded us against the inconveniences that might arise from hence, by shortening the influence of joy, by inclining us to variety, and by giving the property, either of indifference or disgust, to every object that has been too long or too assiduously pursued, with whatever avidity it might have been embraced at first.

That little society to which Eudocia had hitherto been accustomed, was a necessary relief from the assiduities of religious studies and exercises; and, far from being any prejudice, was in reality favourable to the interests of religion. It is certain, however, that she was of a different opinion, upon her first seclusion from the world; but many weeks had not passed before she felt the inconveniences of her mistake, if she was unwilling to perceive the mistake itself.

The exercises of devotion, by being too frequently repeated, became languid and unaffecting: her mind, having been accustomed to communication, shrunk under the weight of its own sentiments; and every succeeding day approached less welcome, and more feared than the former.

What should she do? Should she return to that world she had forsaken and despised? But a sense of shame and pride rose in opposition to that thought, and strangled it in its birth.

In this dissatisfied and dejected state, she recollected the appointment of Al-

phenor's visit—with joy she recollected it, and remembered, with a blush, the difficulties she had started against it.

"How," said she, "shall I conceal that pleasure which I cannot but feel at the sight of Alphenor? If I express my real sentiments he will have reason to think his presence of some consequence to my happiness; and if I receive his visit with an indifference, equal to that with which I received the proposal of it, I shall do violence to that candour and sincerity of heart which cannot bear even the shadow of dissimulation. In the former case, I should appear a weak and unsteady creature to Alphenor; in the latter, I should become insupportable to myself."

While she was thus meditating in what manner she should receive her friend, the time appointed for his visit was at hand. But Alphenor did not appear: master of every key to the human heart, he knew that if, by delaying his visit to Eudocia, he gave it the appearance of uncertainty, that uncertainty would probably create an anxiety on her part, which might not be unfavourable to his design.

This had the desired effect: day after day passed away in the same solitary languor, and Eudocia concluded, that the many objections she had made to Alphenor's visit had determined him at last to think of it no more. This reflection made her miserable, and she now wished for nothing so ardently, as that the presence of her friend would prove those apprehensions vain.

At length he came. A tear fell from the eye of Eudocia when she received him; he observed it, and knew that he had now nothing more to do, than to reconcile her to herself, and to enable her to acknowledge her mistake without shame or confusion.

Those wants that invention or eloquence could supply never distressed him long.

"I hope, Madam," said he, "that a life of solitude has been more comfortable to you than it has been to me."—"How!" cried Eudocia, "has Alphenor been a *solitaire*?"

"Such, Madam, I have been ever since I lost the happiness of Eudocia's

“cia’s conversation. It was always my ambition to imitate her. “Shall she,” said I, “shall a woman have fortitude to forsake the world, and retire to solitude, to practise the sublime duties of religion; and shall I not profit by the example of that virtue I cannot but praise?”—But, alas, Madam! alas, Eudocia! shall I confess to you—”

“What would Alphenor confess?”
—“That either the miseries and the inconveniences of absolute solitude must be very great, or that I must have an uncommon and disgraceful weakness of mind; for the time I have thus devoted, I have not spent in happiness, but in languor and discontent.”

Eudocia shed another tear.

“How kind,” said Alphenor, “thus to pity the unhappiness of your friend!”

“I cannot,” replied Eudocia, “accept of a compliment I do not deserve. The tear you observed had something selfish in it. Alphenor can have no weakness that is not the weakness of human nature; and, could it be any satisfaction to him to know that his friend has been as miserable in a state of solitude as himself, his own ingenuous confession might countenance her in acknowledging it.”

For a woman of my Constantia’s penetration, it would be needless to transcribe any more of the above narrative; and it will be sufficient to inform her, that from the union of Alphenor and Eudocia, in a distant descent, came

THEODOSIUS.

LETTER XVIII.

CONSTANTIA TO THEODOSIUS.

OH, Theodosius!—my guide!—my friend!—my instructor! alas!—no more!

The tear swims in my eye—my heart swells; and my hand trembles while I tell you that you are—banished

for ever from this place and that I am forbidden to see you, or hear from you more.

What, what shall I do! nothing ever can repair this cruel loss—the loss of a wife, a learned, and a virtuous friend! What has the world of equal worth!—Deprived, for ever deprived of that presence which enlivened with invariable cheerfulness and sensibility!—of that conversation which never failed to make the mind richer, the heart happier—and (O cruel extension of resentment!) of that precious, that instructive correspondence, which, as it afforded me the best means of cultivating and improving my mind, ought to have been considered with gratitude by the very person who has forbidden it

But of whom, or of what do I presume to complain? Duty restrains the remonstrances of grief, and the expostulations of sorrow. You are not now ignorant that the quarrel you dreaded has actually happened, with the bitterest recriminations.

Then, farewell, my best and most valuable friend!—for ever to be remembered!—for ever to be regretted! Accept of all I can return for your invaluable, your industrious kindness! Most respected of men!—most esteemed of friends! Accept the gratitude of a tear, and think of

CONSTANTIA.

LETTER XIX.

TO THEODOSIUS.

FROM AN UNKNOWN HAND.

THE writer of this letter is not a stranger to the mutual regard of Theodosius and Constantia. From sure authority he knows, that the hand of that lady is, by the appointment of her father, in which, it seems, she has acquiesced, within two days to be given to another. Theodosius will make what use he thinks proper of this information, and conclude, that he receives it from

A FRIEND.

LETTER XX*.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

THE thought of my Constantia, which has for some time been my only happiness, is now become a great-

er torment to me than I am able to bear. Must I then live to see you another's?—Death is in the thought; and, indeed, life itself is now become a burden to me. May you long be happy in the world! but forget that there was ever such a man in it as

THEODOSIUS.

* This letter, which, with some little variations, is recorded by the Spectator, No. 164, concludes the Correspondence of Theodosius and Constantia, from their first acquaintance to the departure of Theodosius.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



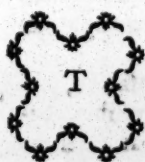
THE
CORRESPONDENCE
OF
THEODOSIUS AND CONSTANTIA.
VOLUME THE SECOND.

CONTAINING

THEIR CORRESPONDENCE AFTER SHE HAD TAKEN THE VEIL.

LETTER I.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.



THE efforts which a mind in trouble makes to regain it's lost peace, like those glances of the sun that struggle through opposing clouds, are delightful to all beholders. When my Constantia rose above that gloom of sorrow, which her too apprehensive heart had thrown around her; when I saw her eye brighten, and her elegant but dejected features assume the beautiful form in which Nature had moulded them; I should have felt the pleasure of a christian, had I not once been Theodosius.

Amiable mourner! let us now forget the name which you have so long remembered with anguish, and which you could not pronounce without trembling, when you affectingly told Theodosius that you believed him to be no more. I wept, my Constantia; but my concern arose not from a sense of your guilt, but of your sufferings. Those tears, indeed, fell from the eyes of Theodosius, and in them the confessor had no part. The powers of memory and reflection were, in one moment,

presented with every scene of distress and tenderness which our unhappy loves had produced. And when I considered myself as the unfortunate cause of your long, your unmerited sufferings, I felt, in one painful minute, what Constantia had endured for years. Perhaps, too, your unequalled fidelity and unaltered love, while they flattered my heart, brought it back a moment to the world. But my guardian spirit whispered me that I had made a higher choice, and reminded me that the duties I owed you were those of a spiritual director, from whom you were to receive consolation and instruction. But, before I proceed to the farther discharge of those duties, let me intreat you to forgive—forgive me, suffering innocence, for being the unhappy, though involuntary instrument of your many miseries!—Five uncheerful years, my Constantia! how has your gentle heart supported itself during that melancholy period? How has it sustained those cruel apprehensions which, in confession, shook your frame? The reflection of what you must have endured for me, as it then wrung my soul with anguish, yet clouds it with sorrow, and has power to disturb the serenity of a mind, which I trust hath been visited by the peace of God.

But

But I should be still more disconsolate, were I not well assured that your present happiness will be in proportion to your former sufferings, and that the difficult ways through which you walked have at last conveyed you to the mansions of peace.

Such, Constantia, is the lot of human life. The road to happiness is seldom strewed with flowers: nor, perhaps, ought it to be so; as we should, in that case, be inclined to take our *passage* for our *port*, and while we enjoyed the manna, we might neglect the promised land.

I am, however, of a different opinion from most men, with regard to moral and natural evils. They derive them from the hand of Providence, and charge the consequences of human passions, follies, and vices, upon the Divine administration. Would this be proper for a person who was labouring under diseases that are the natural and inevitable effects of intemperance? Can those pains which the sufferer has consciously and voluntarily brought upon himself, be deemed the visitation of God? Would not this be *to charge God foolishly*? And if this were admitted, with what propriety could we say of that Divine Being, that *he does not willingly afflict his creatures*? With regard to this doctrine, my Constantia, it is of consequence that you should be rightly informed, because *from mistaken apprehensions of Providence proceed almost all the errors of religious faith*. But most dangerous to ourselves, and most injurious to the Deity, are those opinions which magnify his despotism at the expence of his benevolence. Harken not to such opinions, Constantia: God cannot be the minister of evil.

Our sufferings, natural and moral, are the consequence of that freedom of will, which is the very essence of our moral powers, and without which we should be mere machines, incapable of all virtue. There are, indeed, some natural evils, which to incur or avoid depends not on ourselves, because they come not within the œconomy of reason. But of these we partake only in common with mankind; and as in the dispensation of some of them we can perceive that Providence had wise and gracious purposes, so we may fairly

infer that those whose final causes we cannot apprehend, have their origin in the same universal benevolence.

It is, I think, generally understood, as a doctrine founded upon revelation, that there are such things as divine inflictions even in this life. No doubt there *may be* such, and there *may be* seasons obvious to the eye of Providence, when it is good for us to be afflicted. We *may be* summoned by calamity from the pursuit of pleasure; and though we cannot perceive the hand, the writing *may be* divine.

But I believe that this interposition of the Supreme Power is very rare. Nay, I will own to my Constantia, that my faith in this doctrine is, at best, but diabolical; for while I *believe* I *tremble*. Will God do evil that good may come? Is it necessary? Can Almighty Power be limited to the use of means?

I will, moreover, warn you of the evils that may be derived from this doctrine. It may prompt us to vain comparisons and uncharitable constructions: when we behold the calamities of others, we may be inclined to trace the finger of God where it has not been; and when we tacitly refer to our own condition, we may impute our exemption from evil to that integrity whereof we ought not to boast.

Under the Mosaic dispensation, present inflictions were more visible, because more necessary: for what other restraint was there upon the moral actions of mankind? When the great sanctions of Christianity were set forth, those restraints became inconsiderable, and were totally absorbed in the interests of the new system. *Old things passed away! Behold! all things became new.*

But *we are too apt to mix our religion, and to incorporate the divinity of the Old Testament with that of the New*. The moral law, indeed, still remains in force, because its tendency was everlasting; but when God saw fit to enter into a new covenant with man, the dispensations of his providence were altered, and made agreeable to it. Thus, though under the old law it might be necessary for the Divine Power to *chasten whom he loved*, yet that measure could be no longer expedient, when the hopes and fears of mankind were appealed to by the sanctions of immortality.

It is of great importance to you,
Constantia,

Constantia, to form a right idea of your Creator, and to *know in whom you have believed*. To assist you in this respect, will be one of the first endeavours of Father

FRANCIS.

LETTER II.

CONSTANTIA TO THEODOSIUS.

MY sorrows for Theodosius are no more; he lives, and Constantia is happy. If you would not have me remember my sufferings, forget them yourself; for nothing now could make the reflection of them painful to me but their affecting my revered father.

Gracious Providence! and have I at length found a father? Has Heaven granted what Nature refused? She gave me, indeed, a father; but he forgot the name; or, he remembered the name and the authority, but forgot the duties of the alliance. Do I err? Then instruct me, my holy guide; instruct me to revere the man who banished Theodosius, and imbibed, without cause, the moments of her whom he had brought into being. But I will revere him, for he was kind at last, and permitted me to retire to this asylum of peace. Whatever were his motives, I will revere him; for have I not here found the only comfort I was capable of? Am I not sure that Theodosius lives? Without that conviction (I own my weakness) I should have been unhappy within these holy walls. The exercises of devotion I pursued with equal assiduity before I entered upon the conventual life; but my prayers were the heavy sacrifices of sorrow and contrition. I was alike a stranger to the serenity of peace, and to the comfort of hope. It was not in the power of conscious penitence to set my heart at ease, whenever the painful thought presented itself, that my cowardly acquiescence in the will of a father had been death to the most valuable and most amiable of men. Pitying Heaven has at length undeceived me, and at once restored to my eyes those dear lamented fugitives, Theodosius and Happiness; both changed, indeed, but both improved by the change. The pleasure I enjoyed in the company of the elegant and lively Theodosius, was gay, sprightly,

and animated, like himself: with him it departed and returned; and my heart was alternately delighted and depressed. Very different is the satisfaction I now feel: it is serene and peaceful, like Father Francis. My mind is collected, and my spirits are reposed. No longer agitated with the anxieties and impatience of hopes that terminate here; my eye is fixed on that distant, invariable object of happiness, on which time or chance can have no influence.

Ye holy retreats! ye venerable ailes! do I owe this peace to you? No, not to you: for methinks I have seen in your regions the gloom of discontent. Is it not, my pious Father, from a quiet conscience that I derive this repose? I should not, indeed, have felt it before I entered this convent, but I should not then have known that Theodosius was still in being.

Do not think, however, that I rejoice not in my situation. I do rejoice in it: but my joy arises, as I apprehend, from a disburdened mind. The sudden change from painful apprehension to the certainty of confirmed wishes, was attended with a transport, the effects of which I still feel. But will not these effects last? Surely they will. O my friend! what tears of joy have I shed over that first welcome letter, which informed me that *Theodosius was still alive!*

But do I not forget that I am addressing myself to the venerable Francis? Pardon me! I had indeed forgot, till on re-perusing that ever-dear letter, I beheld the holy name at the bottom. Yes, delightful letter! sweet messenger of peace! Thou informest me that I must consider Theodosius still as dead. Ha! dead, didst thou say? Theodosius is still alive. Didst not thou say that, too? Equivocating letter! be gone into my bosom; but presume not *there* to say that Theodosius is dead.

Heavens! what rambling is this? Whither has my unguided pen betrayed me! Once more forgive me, my revered father.

I thank you for the comfort, as well as for the information which your last letter afforded me. You have placed the Eternal Providence in a light the most amiable and new, at least to me. I had always, hitherto, looked upon that power as the inflicter of temporary evils, and considered both private and public calamities as his judgments.

But

But you have now made me of a different opinion; and I entirely agree with you, that temporary rewards and punishments are superseded by the sanctions of the Christian religion. Nevertheless, I am still of opinion, that God may occasionally interpose, by the infliction of evil, to save a wretch who is thoughtlessly or obstinately hasting to destruction; but, with you, I apprehend that such dispensations are very rare, and am, for the reasons you mention, almost afraid to believe them.

One thought, however, occurs to me on this occasion, which I shall take the liberty to mention, in consequence of the invitation you have given me to express my sentiments without reserve.

We are so entirely different in our powers and passions, and the circumstances of sin and temptation are so extremely various, that though the Almighty might in general leave it to the sanctions of religion alone to influence the actions of men, yet possibly he might (so to term it) reserve a discretionary power, to bring proper objects by afflictions to their duty.

But though the Creator of the universe can in no sense be the author of evil, it cannot be doubted, I apprehend, that he may and frequently does bring good out of evil. Of this the story of Joseph is, in all its circumstances, a remarkable proof. I cannot suppose, neither would you have me believe, that God inspired the brethren of Joseph with envy, that they might sell him into Egypt? yet, what glorious advantages did the Almighty Providence bring out of that event!

And has he not, (for he regards the humblest of his creatures) has he not for me turned the path of sorrow towards the harbour of peace? I will believe it, lest I should prove ungrateful. Pray for me, and instruct me. Adieu!

CONSTANCE.

LETTER III.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

GOOD sense, Constantia, makes better comments than learning; and I find that to propose my opinions to you will be of advantage to myself.

But do you not err, my amiable

friend, and is there not some acrimony in your language, when you speak of your natural father? It must not be. The duties of parents and children are indeed reciprocal: but the unnatural parent cannot acquit the child of its duty, any more than the undutiful child can acquit the parent of his natural obligations. Both these, however, are to be understood as secondary to the great duties we owe ourselves. A child ought no more to embrace misery than vice, to oblige a parent; and a parent is under no obligation to forfeit his own happiness for the gratification of a child. But, under all circumstances, that respect which is due to a parent still subsists; and when Constantia reflects on this, she cannot withhold that respect. Pity your father, Constantia; pray for your father. *If the god of this world hath blinded his eyes*, fervently pray for him in the words of Saint David: 'O God, lighten his eyes, that he sleep not the sleep of death!' He bears no uncommon marks of guilt or infamy: his foible is the love of money; a passion which of all others is the most difficult to guard against, because it increases by imperceptible degrees; and when it has once got entire possession of the heart, I believe there is no remedy for it. Many liberal men have become covetous, but I never knew one covetous man who became liberal: so easy is it, in every instance, to deviate from virtue to vice; and so hard, in that particular case, to rise from vice to virtue. Let us then consider your father rather as an object of compassion, and by no means forget to offer up our prayers for him. Who knows whether Heaven may not listen to the voice of supplicating innocence, and be overcome by the intreaties of filial piety? Would it not throw a new glory around the brows of Constantia should her father be restored to virtue by her prayers?

You are in the right, Constantia, to ascribe your present happiness to peace of conscience; for that is the foundation of all moral and religious comfort. Without that, the hallowed walls of a cloister would be hung with horrors, and the gloomy retreats of a convent would administer melancholy to the mind. It is that alone which gives serenity to our devotion, and enables us properly to communicate with God. It is that which the apostle of the Gentiles,

titles, in his Second Letter to the converts of Corinth and other parts of Achaia, offered to their consideration, to take off that concern and sorrow which they must have felt for the persecutions which he and the rest of his fellow-labourers had undergone in their travels through Asia. The confidence of the conscious mind, he informs them, in every painful, every trying calamity, had still supported them. 'Nay,' continues he, 'we can even rejoice in our distresses, and our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience.'

If we should enquire into the design of Providence in thus furnishing us with this silent inspector, we should find, that in this case, as well as in all others, our God has acted from the dictates of infinite goodness. Had we been without this ever-active censor, what would have been the consequence? Too apt we are, even now, to slight the admonitions of it, and should we not still more easily have fallen a prey to temptation, had there been no internal monitor to inform us that 'this should not be done?' Would not vice have found many more votaries, when no meeting remonstrance checked it, and no painful reflection followed? It is evident, then, that conscience was stationed in the human mind by the *Giver of all good gifts*; and that, for the aid of virtue, and for the support of reason, *it came down from the Father of lights*. Is not this, Constantia, our guardian angel, who warns us against the most dangerous of all enemies, the enemies of our salvation? By this friendly spy we are informed of, and even foresee, their attacks; and happy it is for us that we are thus assisted. The insinuations of vice, after all, are too often successful, and her arts prevail against the force of conviction. Nor, indeed, should we consider all the stratagems she makes use of, would there be any room to wonder at her success. Does she not assume the characters of pleasure, knowledge, virtue; nay, and of religion too: her great patron being conscious that he shall be most successful in his works of darkness, when he assumes the appearance of an angel of light? Does not the most profligate licentiousness call itself Pleasure? Does not mole-sighted infidelity claim the titles of Knowledge and Philosophy? Has not Religion been asserted by blood-thirsty Zeal. And

has not fanatick Hypocrisy likewise assumed her banner, and lifted up her voice in the streets? O conscience! thou sacred guardian of rational virtue and religious truth, let loose thy vengeance upon these monsters; these pests of society, and emissaries of vice!

Do not you perceive, my Constantia, in this dispensation of Providence, the perfection of wisdom and goodness? There are a thousand vices, a thousand enormities, which have nothing to fear from any human tribunal, but are checked and restrained by this mental Judge.

That peace which you imputed to a disburdened mind, led me naturally into these sentiments. 'Will that peace,' you ask, 'continue?' Doubt not that it will. It is *that peace which the world cannot give*; and which, therefore, the world cannot take away. That happiness which is derived from a pleasing concurrence of earthly events, will vanish when Fortune reverts her wheel; the same chance which reared the brittle fabrick of felicity may demolish it in a moment; but the religious satisfaction, if rightly founded, cannot be overthrown.

I am well assured, Constantia, that you will find your happiness increased by the repeated exercises of devotion. It is impossible that the intercourse we have with Infinite Goodness should not be attended with present advantages.

But ever let it be your care, my amiable friend, that your devotion be rational and serene. Let it not rise upon the wings of passion, but be offered up with a subdued and dispassionate decency. Let your mind be clear and composed when you address yourself to your God, lest by any means you should speak unadvisedly to the Father of wisdom.

Wonder not, if I tell you that all your passions should not be absorbed in heaven. Rational devotion is not founded in the glowing ardours of human sensibility; the more it partakes of these, the more remote it will be from that spiritual and intellectual worship which is paid to the Father of lights by superior natures. The adoration of passion is blind and impulsive; that of reason is clear and intelligent. By this worship the Deity is rationally honoured, by that he is implicitly adored.

For these reasons, Constantia, I would not recommend to you those books of

flaming devotion, which, while they kindle the heart, confuse the head, and turn sober piety into wild enthusiasm. If the authors of such books meant to serve religion, they were mistaken; for true piety differs as much from such enthusiastick ravings, as the chearful temper of serene health from the delirious wildness of a fever. *God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.* Whatever is spiritual is dispassionate. Such is God himself, and such ought to be the worship we offer him.

Adieu, my Constantia! May God keep you in his protection, and enlighten you by his grace.

FRANCIS.

LETTER IV.

CONSTANTIA TO THEODOSIUS.

THEODOSIUS is not dead. The polite Theodosius still lives in the venerable Francis. When I received your last letter, my hand trembled, and my heart shrunk. Every idle, every wild expression, every effusion of vain imagination and uncorrected passion, that had dropped from my pen when I wrote to you, rose up and reproached me before your seal was broken. While I read the first period of your letter, I frequently took my eye from the paper, and endeavoured to recollect the contents of my own. With fear and apprehension I proceeded from line to line; but when I found that you had overlooked many of my foibles, and touched the rest with so delicate, so indulgent a hand—O my paternal friend! what floods of tender sorrow fell from the eyes of your Constantia! Surely, the kindness of those whom we revere, and are conscious of having offended, is more cruel than their severity could be. The heart would oppose itself against severe treatment, and call in pride to its aid: but against the force of kindness there is no shield.

In what an amiable light do you represent that Goodness which brought us into being! Conscience was undoubtedly one of his gracious gifts. That moral inspector, whose suggestions so lately gave me pain, is now the principal author of my happiness; and I find that conscience is not more severe as an

enemy, than kind as a friend. Was it not this that supported the sufferer of Uzz, and was he not animated by the suffrage of Conscience, when he wished that man might be permitted to *plead his cause with God*. If I am mistaken, correct me; my guide, my father, and my friend!

CONSTANCE.

LETTER V.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

I Am pleased with your reference to the book of Job, as it gives me an opportunity to tell you with what delight I have always read that beautiful dramatick poem. The ingenious author of it had sacrificed to truth and nature. His character of the pious sufferer, however exalted, is not exaggerated by any unnatural strokes. While he is not permitted to fall into impious exclamation against the decrees of Providence, he complains of his distress with the sensibility of a man to whom *wearisome nights were appointed*. Hence the afflicted patriarch sometimes alarms us with passionate wishes for death, and sometimes awakens our compassion with affecting sighs for his former happiness.

In the passage you have referred to, we are presented with another turn of mind. 'I am sensible,' says he, 'of the innocence of my life. I have done no wrong, neither has any violence been found in my hands; and yet my face is deformed with weeping, and the shadow of death frowns upon my eye-brows. Yet, thus circumstanced, and thus innocent, my prayer surely may be heard. Behold, even now my witness is in Heaven, and my Advocate is in the realms of the highest. My friends continually deride me; but my tears plead silently with God. O that a man might plead his cause with God, even as the son of man pleadeth the cause of his friend!' In another of his speeches there is a passage much to the same purpose. *O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat, I would order my cause before him!*

There is no doubt, Constantia, that

in these sentiments the patriarch was animated by the suffrage of conscience. And there is not a passage in his whole story that is fraught with more important instruction: for it may teach us that, under all the circumstances of human calamity, our only refuge is in the Eternal Providence; and that our peace must be derived from that approving conscience which may encourage us to refer our cause to God. From what other source can we, in such circumstances, look for happiness? Dependent beings have it not to bestow. Were man in his social nature a more exalted creature, the dispensation of peace would not be in his power. He could not remove from others those evils to which he should himself be exposed, nor brighten the prospects of futurity, whither his influence cannot reach.

Man, as being circumscribed in his nature, and subject to events which he cannot command, must, if left to himself, fluctuate in uncertainty, and struggle with disappointment; he, therefore, that would hope with confidence, and enjoy with security, must have a resource which time and chance cannot effect. This can only be in that independent Being, in whose hands are the *issues of life and death*.

Shall we trust to human power? *The strength of man is but as the grass of the field, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower that fadeth.* Shall we trust to human riches? *Riches profit not in the day of wrath.* Shall we trust to human wisdom? *Wisdom herself is the daughter of affliction.* Shall we trust to human friendship? *In the day of adversity there is no hope in man.* Can power preclude the attacks of misfortune? Can riches delight in the hour of mourning? Can wisdom guard against the stratagems of chance? Has friendship a charm for the languor of sickness? How feeble would these supports prove, Constantia, in the trying hour of adversity; or in those moments of awful suspense, when we expect the *everlasting doors* of futurity shall be thrown open, and we shall *enter in*!

Better founded, my friend, will be the supports of that man who refers his cause to God; and whose conscience encourages him to rely on the eternal Providence. He depends on a power that is superior to all events; on the riches

of divine goodness, which can never be exhausted; on that wisdom which can see the remotest consequences of things; and on that friendship which no caprice can change. The man of Uzz had the strongest conviction of this truth: for experience had taught him that human greatness was *lighter than vanity itself*; that riches did actually *make themselves wings and flee away*; that the wisdom of man was *little more than that of the wild ass's colt*; and that his friendship was scarce in proportion to his wisdom. His three friends, whose knowledge should have directed, and whose affection should have soothed him, he often heard, with reasonable impatience, prescribing resolutions to which human nature was not equal, endeavouring to deprive him of his greatest support, the consciousness of his integrity, and sharpening his pains by mortifying reflections. Then it was that, destitute of all earthly consolation, he appealed to Heaven, and even wished that by a personal communication with the Supreme Power, he might be permitted to lay his cause before him.

It is our happiness, Constantia, that this appeal of the patriarch is not necessary for us. The Christian covenant, gracious in every dispensation, has given us *an Advocate with the Father*, who shall plead our cause: an Advocate who knoweth well the frailties of human nature, and whose intercession can never be ineffectual. Let us, my friend, make ourselves acceptable to him; let us lay hold of those terms of redemption which he has procured for us, and our eternal interests will be established on a sure foundation.

You, my Constantia, are among those that have *chosen this good part*; you have laboured for the bread of immortality, and have left that *which perisheth* to the numbers who *disquiet themselves in vain*. Let such be pitied, my friend, not despised; for spiritual pride has its origin in such contempt, and it is one of the many unchristian qualities of blind enthusiasm: nay, you should even watch over your pity; for there is a kind of pity that is allied to contempt.

Born with the gentlest heart, and ever accustomed to adore, with the purest piety, the Author of your being, your religion is become habitual, and you know not the difficulty with which a

heart long devoted to vice must be reformed.

Man, though born with faculties to reach through the depths of time, and powers to flourish through the ages of eternity, seldom looks beyond the present hour, or is affected but by present objects. The immortal soul, confined to this mansion of earth, becomes enamoured of her habitation, and in time persuades herself that *here she has a delight to dwell*. Hence she is solicitous how she may repair the tottering wall, and support the frail fabrick. Yet surely this attachment is strange, Constantia; since, notwithstanding her solicitude for it's preservation, this frame will soon fall, and very soon moulder into it's native earth. Yet a little while, and every breast that is now warm with hope, and busy with design, shall drop into the cold and senseless grave. The eye that is reading this page shall be closed in darkness, and the hand that writes it shall crumble into dust!

In that hour when the immortal spirit shall exchange this transient being for the allotments of eternity! in that awful hour, Constantia, what shall support us? Nothing, but the consciousness of a well-conducted life. That divine confidence in the Father of nature; that peace of God which passeth all understanding; that serene affiance; that exalted repose of soul: these are the fruits of a life long resigned to God, and directed by religion. Yet surely these are well worth our transient labours: if these are not secured, we have lived and we have toiled in vain; we have given our *money for that which is not bread, and our labour for that which satisfieth not*.

Live, my Constantia, supported by that gracious Power whom you serve, supported by his providence, and enlightened by his grace.

FRANCIS.

LETTER VI.

CONSTANTIA TO THEODOSIUS.

WELCOME, sweet PEACE OF CONSCIENCE! Lovely stranger! Daughter of religious duty, welcome! How heavy was my heart, how painful were my hours in thy absence! How gloomy and dissatisfied! With what

anxiety and uneasiness did I arise from the most comfortable of all duties, the holy sacrifice of prayer! The incense seemed to rise unacceptably: My prayers were feeble; they were unable to reach the throne of the Almighty, and returned, but not with happiness, to my *own bosom*. To the possession of thee, sweet PEACE, what are riches and honours? What were the wealth of kingdoms, the acquisition of worlds, purchased at thy expence?

O my paternal friend, how forcible is truth, divine truth! With what pleasing conviction did every ray of it, that illumined your last letter, shine upon my heart! How poor did the interests, the pleasures of this world appear, when compared with the pure, *the peaceable wisdom, that cometh from above!*

'FATHER of lights, ever grant me this wisdom! Let the prayers of my father and my friend co-operate with my own, at thy eternal throne, and procure for me the blessed influences of thy sacred Spirit!

This, my venerable guide, is the substance of my daily prayer, which, since I received your instructions, I have repeated with greater assiduity. I have ever been convinced, that the Divine concurrence was necessary to assist us in the discharge of our duty, as well as to direct us in the knowledge of it; but that emphatical prayer which concludes your letters, 'that the eternal Providence would enlighten me with his grace,' has given new force to my convictions.

I will not prescribe to you the subject of your letters. I shall listen with pleasure and attention to your instructions, to whatever point of duty or of doctrine they may be directed; but allow me to wish, my revered friend, that on this important doctrine of Grace I may soon receive your valuable observations.

Possibly this divine dispensation may be necessary in a greater or in a less degree than I suppose it to be. I have received different accounts of it from the professors of our holy faith, but I think that all of them have concluded it to be necessary for us; though in what measure it was necessary, they have not agreed.

It is generally understood, that this Divine Grace is the consequential privilege of Christianity, purchased for us by

by him who died for our redemption; yet I have sometimes thought that the author of the Book of Psalms prayed for this enlightening grace, in that passage which you have quoted in one of your letters, '*My God, lighten my eyes, that I sleep not the sleep of death.*'

With respect to this opinion, as well as to the necessity or expedience of divine grace, and the degree in which it is dispensed, I hope for your kind instructions.

Those books of flaming devotion, which you have advised me not to read, I own I have hitherto been too fond of. Particularly since I entered upon the conventual life, I have been much conversant in such books. They were recommended to me by my lady abbess, who is a good woman; but her devotion seems not to be of that serene and temperate kind which you describe and approve. She is unequal in her religious deportment, being sometimes elevated, but more frequently depressed.

What do I not owe to you, my father, for procuring me the book of God in a language I understand? Agreeably to your directions, I make that my principal study, and trust that *it is able to make me wise unto salvation.*

Never, I hope, in the heart of your Constantia, shall that spiritual pride you mention find a place. I am too sensible of their unhappy condition *who live without God in the world*, to look upon them with any other emotions than those of compassion. With the heart that is destitute of religious peace, my own has been a fellow-sufferer; and should I triumph in my comparative happiness or purity, should I thence derive any sentiments of contempt for others, the reflection would rather mortify than soothe me, since I should appear to despise in them what I myself had been.

The hour of prayer is at hand—I come; daughters of devotion, I join you—and now will I once more intreat the Author of life and death long to spare Theodosius, for the comfort and support of

CONSTANCE.

LETTER VII.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

I Intended to make the dispensation of grace the subject of a letter, and I thank you for putting me in a method of treating it.

Your first question is, whether this dispensation was only the consequential privilege of Christianity; or whether it was not also the privilege of Judaism.

The latter part of this proposition you infer from that poetical petition of the psalmist, '*My God, lighten my eyes,*' &c. Now, Constantia, it is obvious enough to suppose that the king of Israel might pray for the illumination of the Divine Spirit, as his son and successor prayed for wisdom, though under their system *there was no promise of the ordinary dispensations of grace.* It would be natural for a people who were *visited by God*, and beheld, on so many occasions, the interposition of his Providence, to apply to him for his assistance under the conflicts of religious duty. It would be still more natural for them *who sat in darkness*, to petition for that light, of which some emanations were communicated in the extraordinary influences of the Spirit, though, agreeably to the scheme of the eternal and unerring Providence, the perfection of it should not be displayed till *the fullness of time.*

This may be sufficient to answer your first question, which is rather curious than useful.

With respect to the necessity or expedience of the Divine Grace, I have much more to say. The philosophers of our system, who weigh every thing in the scale of natural obligation, or moral aptitude, exclaim against this doctrine of grace. '*If you admit the impulse of a superior agent, where, say they, is the moral agency of man? Besides, is it agreeable to the fitness of things that God should prescribe a law to man, to which his moral powers alone are not adequate? This,*' continue they, '*would be to make God an Egyptian task-master. The moral powers of man must be adequate to the duties appointed him, and the doctrine of grace is therefore superfluous.*'

At this avenue, which is opened by the Christian philosopher, in rushes the philosopher of Nature. He takes up the argument where the other laid it down. '*You have very rightly observed, Sir,*' says he, '*that God would be an Egyptian task-master, if he gave us a law that we were unable to live up to. Such, I insist upon it, is the law that is said to be from him. — From him therefore it cannot be.*'

Thus,

Thus, Constantia, you see the consequence of philosophizing in religion.—Give up one redoubt to the enemy, and he turns our batteries against us. To both these ungracious opponents, I shall give a short answer. To the Christian sophist I say, that the powers of man may be inadequate to the law of religion, though it's origin was from God; and to the philosopher of Nature I answer, that the law of religion may be from God, though the powers of man are inadequate to it. The same argument will prove both these points.

A perfect law might be given to imperfect beings without any impropriety: it might be given to make them exert to the utmost the powers of their nature, and strain to higher degrees of virtue for the high prize of their calling—it might be intended to encourage an useful emulation, by making still greater degrees of excellence attainable—it might be designed to prevent indifference and independance, which man would naturally have suffered to grow upon him, when secure, by his own power, of attaining to moral perfection, and of discharging every duty enjoined him. A dependance on the Almighty for assistance in the conduct of life is productive of many advantages: it prevents that pride and carelessness which are too often the effect of security and independence; it opens an intercourse with the Deity by prayer; which, though the most delightful part of religious duty, would become unnecessary the moment that the aid of Divine grace should be found to be so.

From these co-operating causes, Constantia, you see how expedient is the dispensation of grace. How necessary it is for us in our present state, we need not make appeals to reason, but to experience.

To be ignorant of the sacred truths of religion, and to be destitute of the communicable influences of God's Holy Spirit, has been always considered by good men as the most deplorable condition of human wretchedness. Hence we find it represented in the sacred writings by the terrible images of darkness and death. *Those, says the prophet, that sat in darkness have seen a great light, and they that were in the region and the shadow of death, on them hath the light shined.—Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and*

Christ shall give thee light.—My God, lighten mine eyes that I sleep not in death. This was the petition of that prince, whose devotion was so pure and exalted, that the Almighty himself bore testimony to his excellence in pronouncing him *a man after his own heart.* And could he, *the light of Israel*—could he, distinguished for his knowledge of the then revealed religion, could he, illumined with the spirit of prophecy, think it necessary to pray for the enlightening grace of Heaven, and should not we much more?—we, who cannot, like the prophet, boast any superior portion of the Divine Spirit, and who have yet, with him, the same propensities to evil.

On us, indeed, *the Sun of Righteousness hath shined.* To us is displayed a perfect knowledge of those saving truths, those exalted doctrines, that were then only seen in types and shadows. It is our happiness to know the perfect will of God, revealed by his Son, Jesus Christ. The sacred Scriptures contain every thing necessary to salvation. There every moral duty is clearly stated, and every point of faith sufficiently discovered. To these *fountains of light and immortality* we may apply without deception, for that knowledge which *leadeth us into all truth.*

Blessed be the gracious Author of our salvation! *the veil of partition* is now taken away; those types and figures, which were *the shadowings of good things to come*, are removed, and *we know what we worship.*

It is for us, then, on whom *the light hath shined*, to be willing, at least, to *rejoice in that light.* It is for us, with unwearied assiduity to study the holy Scriptures, *which are able to make us wise unto salvation.* Whatever attainments we make in science, if we neglect this, the only *true wisdom*, our knowledge and our industry are vain. Whatever skill, whatever prudence we possess in the œconomy of this life, if the acquisition has been made by the neglect of this knowledge, it is skill that darkens, and prudence that destroys.

The rude notices of natural reason alone can never be sufficient to direct us in every part of our conduct. Those lights, though useful and universal, are liable to be obscured by the passions, to be enfeebled by vice, or misled by

by error. The understanding may be made subservient to the heart, and employed in the defence of what we wish, rather than what we ought to do. The force of truth may be overcome by habit; and, like the heathen statuary, we may fall down before an image of our own framing. It is essentially necessary, therefore, that we should have some certain rules of action, some plain directions laid down for our conduct, which can neither be perverted by sophistry, nor misconstrued by error.

Such, Constantia, is the necessity of that external information which has been ordinarily dispensed to us by the Spirit of God; which, while I have been attending to, I have not lost sight of my argument.

The same causes which concur to make the outward evidences of the Spirit of God so necessary for our information, render the internal aids of his Grace as necessary for our direction and support in the discharge of our duty.

To acquire a consummate knowledge of the holy Scriptures is not alone sufficient to conduct us to the *land of everlasting life*. These are the leading star by which we must direct our course, but other means are necessary to guard us from the tempest above, and the shoals below. The ocean of life is treacherous and uncertain. Many latent dangers await the passenger, and he is frequently in the greatest peril when he thinks himself the most secure.

Shall I change the scene, and suppose that we have an earthly passage to the city that is not made with hands? Yet, in that case, how many circumstances of danger to the traveller does the allegory afford me! A thousand accidents concur to make us deviate from the *narrow way that leadeth to life*. We are on one side threatened by horrible precipices, on another invited by prospects of beauty: despair points out to us the length and difficulty of the journey, and weariness importunes us to seek the vallies of repose.

The object, indeed, at which we finally aim, would infinitely counterbalance every inconvenience. And the sufferings of the present time will bear no comparison with the glory that shall be revealed among us. But objects placed at a distance, however important, never strongly affect us: as in the attraction of bodies; if those with which

they sympathize be far removed; they will adhere to others more near, to which they have less relation.

Some portion of Divine Grace, some measure of God's Holy Spirit, is indispensibly necessary for every Christian. Mere human wisdom, though assisted by the knowledge of the Divine Revelation, will not always be sufficient to support us in our duty. How often, with the conviction of truth upon us, are we insensibly drawn into the ways of error! How often, in the consciousness of determined integrity, are we betrayed into vice by the stratagems of temptation! Though we may in general be very sensible of our duty, yet we have not at all times the same capacity of attention, nor the same readiness of apprehension to distinguish good from evil. The faculties of the mind are sometimes vigorous, and sometimes languid. The will is frequently retained by idleness, or solicited by desire, without receiving any instructions from reason; and the oeconomy of the soul is oftener in disorder than that of the body.

In such circumstances, Constantia, have we not need of some superior aid? Want we not the directive influences of the Spirit of Wisdom, to keep us in the narrow paths of duty? Can there be any doubt that the ordinary dispensations of Grace are necessary?

But in what degree, you ask, is this grace ordinarily dispensed? to which I must beg leave to answer, that *God giveth not his Spirit by measure*. It is enough for us to know what he hath declared, that *his Grace is sufficient for us*. It must be necessary in a greater or a less degree, in proportion to the different tempers, situations and circumstances of mankind: and to the prayers and endeavours of each a sufficiency thereof will be dispensed. To our prayers and endeavours, I say, it will be dispensed; agreeably to which we are told, that *our heavenly Father will give of his Holy Spirit to them that ask it in his Son's name*. And while we are informed that *it is God who worketh in us*, we are commanded to *work out our own salvation*. Thus, Constantia, a sufficiency of the Divine Grace is promised to our prayers—promised to co-operate with our endeavours. And it is thus, that the oeconomy of grace interferes not with that freedom of will
on

on which all our merit, as rational creatures, is founded. Our prayers and endeavours are voluntary acts, and we are consequently as much at liberty to lay hold of the dispensation of Grace as of Redemption, and as much at liberty to reject it, to resist or to *quench* the Spirit.

Were not this the case, Constantia, were the dispensation of Grace entirely independent on our own will, the moral agency of man would be superseded, and the doctrine of rewards and punishments would be vain. If, according to the doctrine of fanatics, the Grace of God be an impulsive principle, partially bestowed, and actuating us as mere machines, then the Almighty has taken our salvation into his own hands, and rendered moral virtue an empty name.

But this doctrine will, on the conclusion, be found blasphemous to God, and injurious to mankind. For, if God be the sole agent of our salvation, to him it must be owing if any soul perisheth; and if moral virtue be vain, the flood-gates of vice may be thrown open, and the world be overwhelmed with the deluge.

But if God be the sole author of our salvation, and if his Grace be an impulsive principle which we cannot resist, then no soul shall perish; for we are expressly told that *God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*. If it should be replied, that some do perish; nay, that many go on *in the broad way to destruction*: then I answer, that God has not the power to do what he is willing to do. He is willing that none should perish, and yet you say that some do perish, therefore there are some whom he has it not in his power to save. Now God is all-powerful, consequently he must have dispensed with his power in that respect by making the salvation of man conditional. If we accept not the mercies of the Gospel on the terms that are offered to us, God himself can do no more for us—God himself cannot act inconsistently with his own laws. Every attribute of the supreme perfection must be perfect—Justice and truth are his essential attributes—his justice and his truth therefore must be perfect.

You see, my friend, how wretchedly founded is that fanatical doctrine, which represents the Grace of God as

an irresistible principle, acting unconditionally, and impelling men to salvation. You see what dishonour it would bring upon the Deity, what disorder amongst mankind, and how inconsistent it is with the sacred writings.

If, therefore, the Grace of God be a conditional, not an irresistible principle, it will, as I observed before, be dispensed only in a sufficient degree: that is, it will effectually co-operate with our own endeavours in working out our salvation. More than this we have no right to expect from the Grace of God. Infinite Wisdom will not do what is not necessary to be done. The extraordinary influences of the Spirit have ceased, because they are no longer requisite.

Saint Paul himself, in his First Epistle to the converts at Corinth, tells them, that the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit should cease, but that Charity, which was a moral grace of Christians, should still remain, in consequence of those ordinary dispensations of the Spirit, that should continue with the church.

Whatever, therefore, appears to exceed these ordinary influences of Grace, the raving flights of enthusiasm, and the rage of fanatical zeal; the sudden impulses of devotional rapture, and the wild reveries of Tartuffian dreamers; all these are the fruits of insane imagination, and cannot proceed from that pure and peaceable Spirit which cometh from the Father of Lights.

The office of that Spirit is to inform the mind with a right sense of its duty, and to animate and encourage it in the discharge of it. In this light it is properly called by our Redeemer, that Comforter which should *lead us into all truth, and teach us all things*.

How much are those offices misrepresented by the followers of Calvin, and by enthusiasts of every denomination! What visionary communications, what suggestions of sick fancy, have those delirious dreamers imputed to the Spirit of wisdom! as if God would render vain that faculty of reason which characterizes man by his own image; and as if the enlightening Spirit of Grace would rather obscure than illumine the understanding; these unthinking men have charged upon the operations of that Spirit the most extravagant effects of wild insanity. Under the influence of imaginary calls, some have preached, and some have prophesied. The mechanic

chanick has forsaken his awl, and his wife her distaff, and with heads full of glorious visions, together they have issued into the streets and highways to publish the everlasting Gospel.

It will always be difficult for devout ignorance to distinguish between the suggestions of imagination, and the influences of the Divine Spirit. Unaccustomed to abstracted thinking, or even to draw conclusions from the most simple propositions, the ignorant are unable to form any judgment of that mode of inspiration, which should be most consistent with the wisdom of Providence. They consider not that it must be more agreeable to infinite knowledge to invigorate the nobler faculty of reason, and to bring the passions into subjection, than by inflaming *them* to weaken that faculty, and by so doing to *put darkness for light*. Hence all the waking dreams of blind enthusiasm are cherished and respected as the offspring of Grace; and the mistaken visionary ascribes to the Author of Reason, such impulses and communications as could only exist in a mind where reason was impotent.

But the delusions of innocent enthusiasm would hardly deserve attention, were they not sometimes productive of consequences that render that enthusiasm no longer innocent. From the belief of divine impulses, the flames of persecution have been lighted, and the altars of superstition have been adorned; the sanguinous have been prompted to indulge their natural thirst of blood, and the gloomy have forsaken the society of human creatures, and inhabited caves and cells in solitary sanctity. This species of religious retirement I have ever condemned; but my objections do not affect the conventual life, for there is great difference between retiring to a cave in some unfrequented desert, and entering into a religious society*. Many more than these have been the effects of mistaken impulses. The history of the church in every period abounds with them.

Yet how easy is it, upon reflection, to guard against these delusions! What is the end of Divine Grace? It is only to aid us in the knowledge and in the discharge

of our duty. Therefore, whatever impulse hath other tendency than these, it cannot be of God, because it is not agreeable to his wisdom to do what is superfluous. A sufficiency of his Grace is what alone he hath promised us, and what alone it is consistent with Infinite Wisdom to give. Will the Father of Lights amuse his creatures with dreams and reveries? Will he sport with their passions, depress and elevate, inflame and distract them? Will he not rather assist *such as call upon him faithfully*, to bring those passions into subjection; and to confirm in it's proper empire the nobler principle of reason? Is not such the mode of operation that the all-wise Creator would assign to his assisting Spirit? *The wisdom that cometh from above*, we are told, *is pure and peaceable*: such wisdom is congenial with our reason, which is a clear and steady principle; and therefore it must act in concurrence with that principle; at least, it's effects cannot be repugnant to it's conceptions.

Thus, Constantia, by the information of the revealed word, and by the use of that reason which God has given us that we may be able to understand his will, we learn the nature of such dispensations as his wisdom hath thought proper to communicate to us.

I have extended my observations on this subject farther than you desired, or might expect, because the doctrine of Grace is an important subject, and the right understanding of it may not only preserve us from many absurdities and indecencies in religious duty, but from many dangerous errors both in practice and belief. When once the heart gives itself up to blind fanaticism, we cannot tell to what attempts it may be seduced, or where the influences of unrestrained and (what will always be the consequence) of misdirected passions may lead us. When the imagination triumphs over reason, the œconomy of the mind is destroyed; and Confusion, with Insanity in her rear, approaches, and usurps the empire of the soul.

May every ministering spirit of heaven guard the peace of my Constantia! May her piety be uniformly rational

* There is, indeed, as Father Francis observes, a difference between these two sorts of retirement; but, in the Editor's opinion, the difference lies only in the mode; for they are equally repugnant to the determinations of Providence, which has made the whole moral duty of man to consist in the social capacity of serving his fellow-creatures.

and calm! May the incense of her devotion rise from the altar of reason, the voluntary sacrifice of gratitude! May she ever *know whom she worships*, and remember that an intellectual Being requireth an intellectual adoration! In every act of worship, and in every point of duty, may she be constantly supported and directed by the pure and peaceable Spirit of Truth! By that Spirit may she be enlightened to discern those finer relations that exist between the Creator and the creature, undistinguished by the eye of human intelligence, and learn from thence not only what is due, but what is acceptable to God. Under every circumstance of life may she be happy in ease, or contented in resignation; and when the short thread of life is spun, when she enters upon the inheritance of immortality, may she receive the fulness of the blessings which Infinite Benevolence has in reserve for those *that honour him as he ought to be honoured*.

FRANCIS.

LETTER VIII.

CONSTANTIA TO THEODOSIUS.

HOW beautiful does the religion of Christians appear, when beheld with the eye of reason! How amiable the benevolent Author of it! Surely, my revered friend, there is a secret delight in the investigation of divine truths, and the discovery of them affords the greatest of pleasures. Your most obliging letter on the subject of Grace, gave you, I presume, no less satisfaction in the writing, than it afforded me in the perusal; and I think I can discern, in the more animated passages of that letter, those pleasing sensations you felt when the light of religious truth shone the clearest to your eye. If I am not mistaken in this, and if your pleasure in writing that letter, were equal to that which I found in reading it, you have had a better reward than my gratitude can give you.

You have justified the scheme of Providence in the dispensation of Grace, against every objection that has been or can be brought against it. You have placed in a clear light the benevolent

purposes of the Father of Mercies in that dispensation, who has made man dependent on him for the assistance of his divine Spirit, only because he has a delight to give it, and because it must be the happiness and comfort of his creatures to receive it. It plainly appears from your account of it, that the oeconomy of grace interferes not with that freedom of will on which all moral goodness must be founded, and without which we could neither be capable of virtue nor vice, neither intitled to rewards, nor liable to punishment. It appears that the moral agency of man may be exercised in the application of the Divine Grace, and that he is at liberty either to apply or to reject it.

With respect to the degree in which it is dispensed, you have, no doubt, rightly observed, that as God will not do what is unnecessary, no more than a sufficiency of it will be granted to our prayers: and as to the mode of it's operation, it is surely consistent with the wisdom that gave us reason for our direction, to render by his grace the efforts of that reason effectual, in subjecting the passions, and reducing them to the obedience of his holy laws. By a rational worship, you have observed, in a former letter, that God is most honoured; when, from a due and dispassionate consideration of his benevolent works, we come, from a principle of gratitude, to offer him a *reasonable sacrifice*. This sacrifice would indeed be no longer reasonable, were we irresistibly impelled to offer it by the influences of a superior agency: we should then be the instruments of a worship paid to God, but we should not be the worshippers; and with what delight should the eternal Wisdom look upon our sacrifice, when conscious that it proceeded not from a voluntary discharge of duty, but was the inevitable consequence of his own agency? With what propriety could he say, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant*; when he himself has been the agent, and the servant no more than a machine in his hands? To suppose, then, that the Divine Grace is an irresistible principle, must be *to charge God foolishly*; and whatever reverence I have heretofore paid to those misdeeming enthusiasts who have this doctrine, I must now retract it, and shall, for the future,

future, rather pity them as mistaken, than respect them as inspired.

But I will own to you, my paternal friend, that I should not so easily have become the disciple of reason, had you made that faculty a dictator on its own authority; when you only make it instrumental in the application of truths revealed, as that is, undoubtedly, the purpose for which it was given us, I cannot but agree with you in every conclusion you have made.

How shall I thank you for the repeated instances of your care and kindness, for those ardent wishes that glow in the last page of your letter, those prayers for your Constantia's happiness and safety? O may they be heard at the throne of everlasting mercy! and rise not unaccompanied with those daily offerings which she delights in making for the preservation of her friend. Adieu.

CONSTANCE.

LETTER IX.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

AS you were not displeased with my account of the dispensation of grace, I will now give you my thoughts on a duty, to the due discharge of which, that dispensation is promised. I have observed before, that, were the grace of God an unconditional and irresistible principle, our prayers would be superfluous. Had the almighty Providence formed an irreversible decree with respect to our salvation, or were he totally uninfluenced by any thing that we should do in order to obtain the aid of his Sacred Spirit, our acts of devotion would be as absurd as every other act of duty would be vain. Yet there are many, Constantia, who hold this doctrine; because the Christian covenant is called the covenant of grace, they annihilate the moral agency of man, and represent him as entirely passive in the accomplishment of his salvation. I have sufficiently exposed the errors of this unscriptural doctrine, and shall therefore proceed to consider prayer as one of the means of grace.

Our Saviour himself, who died for our sins, and rose again for our justification, (that is, for our deliverance

from eternal death; for the word *justification* in the sacred writings, generally signifies deliverance, and in that sense I understand it in this passage) our Saviour himself, I say, whose merits with the Father were the primary means of procuring us this grace, expressly convinceth us that it is to be obtained by prayer. For, in the first place, this was the method by which he proposed to obtain it for us—I will pray to the Father, says he, and he will send you another Comforter, who shall abide with you always; and, in the next place, he assures his disciples, that his heavenly Father will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask it. The passage is express to the purpose. I say unto you, ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Which of you, being a father, if his son shall ask bread, will give him a stone? Or if a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Nay, and if he should ask an egg, will he give him a scorpion? If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much rather shall your Father, who is in heaven, give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? The pains that the Divine Reasoner hath taken to convince his disciples upon this point of faith, are very remarkable. He first commands, or rather exhorts them to offer their prayers to God; then, for their encouragement, he assures them that such prayers are heard and granted; and afterwards, for their conviction, he infers an undeniable conclusion from a parity of reason. Thus there remains no doubt, that as the mediation of Christ is the primary, so prayer is the secondary means of Grace.

In what words, then, and with what spirit shall we pray? *Wherewithal shall we come before the Lord, and humble ourselves before the high God?* Is not, it may be asked, that form of prayer which our Saviour taught his disciples, comprehensive of all our wants, and sufficient for the Christian church in all ages? Should this question be put, I would answer in the negative. The prayer which our Saviour taught his disciples was a temporary form. The redemption of mankind was not then accomplished; the means of grace were not effectuated. The Saviour of the

world was not ascended into heaven, and it was in consequence of his ascension only, that *the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth*, was granted to the church. *If I go not away, says he, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go away, I will send him unto you.* It was impossible, therefore, that he should teach his disciples to pray for that grace which was not yet attainable, nor communicated, except in an especial manner. Some subtle interpreters have, indeed, supposed, that the meaning of 'thy kingdom come,' in the prayer above-mentioned, is metaphorical, and that the influence of grace is thereby signified; but, setting aside those arguments I have brought against the possibility of this interpretation, I would ask these men, whether it be probable that the wise Author of our salvation should teach his disciples to express so important a petition by a distant metaphor? Whether he who taught them plainly to say 'Give us this day our daily bread;' would not, if it had been then proper, have taught them as plainly to say, 'Give us the grace of thy Holy Spirit;' or to have expressed themselves in some other form of words as clear, and as much to the purpose. Had the words, *thy kingdom come*, no signification that was literally obvious, they might as well have been wrested to one sense as to another; but the kingdom of God was an expression familiar to the ears of the disciples, and to them it required no comment. They knew that it meant the establishment of the Messiah's evangelical kingdom. Another argument that this form of prayer was temporary, and is now insufficient, is this, that the apostles made use of other prayers. To prove this, it is not necessary to adduce a single instance, because numbers offer themselves.

Neither is it necessary for me to instruct you, Constantia, in what words you should pray for the assistance of the Divine Spirit. Eloquence is in no wise essential to prayer; it may be necessary for the persuasion of men, but God *setteth it at nought*. Let us not think that we shall be heard the sooner for our *much speaking*, nor yet for the elegance of our expression. If we pray by a set

form, let the language of it be artless and unaffected, and in that respect resemble the *singleness* or simplicity of heart, with which we should offer it to the all-knowing Wisdom. I would readily give you such a form as I speak of, but the church alloweth not a private ecclesiastick to compose and communicate a form of prayer. For you, however, whose understanding is clear, and whose memory is retentive, who digest your thoughts with propriety, and express them with ease, scarce any form of private devotion is necessary.*

With regard to the spirit and manner wherewith we ought to approach the eternal Providence, we cannot be too attentive to so important a circumstance. We should endeavour, as much as possible, to be serene and recollected. Before we address that almighty Being, we should meditate a moment on his sublime perfections, and fill our minds with the idea of his glorious attributes. But rather let us contemplate him in his benevolent, than in his judicial capacity. We ought, indeed, never to be without the idea of the latter, but the first should always have the leading influence in our minds. Our heavenly Father treated us not as servants, but as sons; our acts of obedience, therefore, to him should be purely filial. He delighteth not in the prostration of servile fear, but in the cheerful worship of reverential gratitude. Let us not approach him with the cries and lamentations of Moloch's worshippers, nor with the self-castigation of the votaries of Baal. Yet, on this, as well as on every other occasion, let us remember the vast distance between fallen man and his Creator; let us consider that our God, though seated on the throne of everlasting mercy, is an offended Being, whose laws we have broken, and to whose favour we have forfeited our natural right. These reflections will make us approach him with that humble and dependent spirit, which must become a frail and erring creature, in the presence of its almighty and all-perfect Judge.

Let the incense we offer him be the pure and undissembled devotion of the heart. Let us avoid the Pharisaical ostentation of long prayers. Our moral

* How idle have been all the disputes concerning the preference of praying by *form*, or praying *extempore*! Both have the preference in their proper place; the former in publick, the latter in private devotion.

and religious, as well as our natural wants, may be expressed in few words, and God is not slow to hear. One penitential sigh, one humble acknowledgment, will find its way to heaven. One earnest petition for the Divine Assistance, one sincere expression of gratitude, will be as effectual as a thousand repetitions. Diffuse and declamatory prayer is a mark of fanaticism, the bold and extravagant effusion of *holy impudence*. Shall we think that the Divine Wisdom is to be courted by *much speaking*? Is it necessary that the sincere of heart shall weary Heaven with long importunity? Would not this be to suppose that God is hard to be intreated, or that his ear is obstructed, *and cannot hear*? How brief is that temporary form of prayer which our Saviour taught his disciples! Does that form contain one mere superfluous word, or one mere collateral or unimportant thought! Is the imagination indulged in vain descriptions, or are the passions roused to eager imprecations? as if the Divine Author of it had foreseen the idle prolixity of those ranting prayers which should be used in future ages of the church, he has in the above-mentioned form been remarkably concise. There is not, perhaps, in any language, an instance of composition where so much is expressed in so few words.

It must be owned, however, that to express our thoughts with brevity and precision, must be the effect of literary skill with us, as it was of divine knowledge with the Author of the disciples prayer. But from the brevity of that prayer we may learn, what may be of more general use, to offer no superfluous addresses to the Almighty. If we look into many of our modern forms of prayer, particularly such as have been composed by Christians for their private use, and afterwards printed for the service of the publick, we shall find that this precept has been very much neglected. With a profusion of depreciating expressions, partly taken from the sacred writings, and partly the coinage of their own imaginations, as if they would make a merit of their self-abasement, they are loud in complaining of themselves as the worst of creatures. This is a burlesque upon Christian humility. I have known a pious lady, whose life was one continued scene of devotion, daily repeat these humiliating

lyes, when she offered up her prayers to the Father of truth and wisdom. Our Saviour's approbation of the publican's prayer affords no argument in favour of these. The publican was supposed to be really a sinner, not in the ordinary, but in the extraordinary sense of the word; yet even he makes *no parade of humiliation*. He, though a publican, does not call himself the worst of men, but saith simply, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!' This was all that he said, and all that was necessary for him to say.

These over-abasing forms of prayer are not only improper for the Christian who leads a regular life, but must likewise be repugnant to his conscience, and obnoxious to his sincerity. It is impossible that, while he is sensible of his good disposition, and endeavours to live according to the Divine laws, he should believe himself to be the wicked wretch that his prayers represent him.

I have yet one objection more to these humiliating rants, these effusions of fanaticism. They are not only improper for the good man, but unnecessary for the sinner—at least, on the part of God they are unnecessary: for, of God can it be supposed, that he is ignorant of our conduct, and must learn it from a multitude of self-abasing words? Or shall we think that he delights in the frequent mention of that wickedness, the practice of which offended him? Or may we believe that he will be prevailed upon by the loudness of tautological declamation? If these things are not to be supposed, we shall conclude that these harangues of self-abasement are unnecessary with respect to God, and that it will be more proper, as well as more modest, for the sinner to use the brief acknowledgment of the publican.

Long and loud confessions of sin before God, are always a mark of weak understanding: nay, I have known some ecclesiasticks so extremely injudicious as to recommend this practice in private devotion; and so weak as to advise us, in our addresses to God, to mention particularly the several sins we have been guilty of. Is not this to suppose *that God is even such a one as ourselves*? Or is it not to conceive yet *more meanly* of him? When a person is disposed to ask forgiveness of those whom he has offended, and to acknowledge his faults, would a generous mind be delighted with

with the recapitulation of them? Would it not rather be painful to a generous mind? And shall we dare to think that man is possessed of greater generosity, or more enlarged conceptions, than that infinite Being from whom he derives both? Why, then, ye self-abasing sinners, will ye weary God with your mistaken prayers? Why will ye offer to the Divine ear what it delighteth not to hear? Can ye not be humble, without importuning Heaven with your ACTS of humility? Is not this a species of *eye-service*?

Let us consider the parable of the prodigal son, which may in some measure be looked upon as a form of repentance. He had meditated, we are told, a short speech of acknowledgment. '*Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and no longer am worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants.*' This confession he meditated, and this was as brief, for the circumstances, as the prayer of the publican. But what do we find in the sequel of the story? We find that this short speech was rendered still shorter, by the omission of the last clause. The penitent son, after he had met with such a gracious reception from his father, probably concluded that such a humiliating overture would give him pain; or if he were about to make it, the father interrupted him, by calling to his servants, and ordering the best robes. Observe, my Constantia, the skill of the sacred parabolist in this place. *And the son said unto him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and no longer am worthy to be called thy son.'* —But the father said unto his servants, '*Bring forth the prime robe, and put it upon him.*' Is not the omission of the last clause in the premeditated speech, (*make me as one of thy hired servants*) after such a reception, remarkably beautiful? When this is considered, does it appear in the least probable that the father should either expect, or take delight in a detail of his son's follies and vices?

As an act of repentance, with respect to God, such a detail cannot be necessary: for what is repentance, but a relinquishment of sins, from a conviction that they have offended the Judge of the world?

I have said more on this circumstance

than I at first intended, and possibly more than you may think it required: but nothing is unimportant that relates to the worship of God, or that contributes any thing to rectify that worship.

For this reason, you will favour me with your attention, while I point out some other errors that I have observed in forms of devotion. Among these are impertinent expressions, such as have no immediate relation either to the general or particular purposes of prayer; such as are introduced merely for parade, or such as have no other end than to fill the harmony of a period, or to form the side of an antithesis. Of these I could produce many instances, from almost every form of prayer, whether public or private, from profuse expatiations on the past and present works of God, and from superfluous details of our conduct towards him; when with careful minuteness we inform him of circumstances which he knows better than ourselves.

Neither can I approve of those devout rhapsodies, those *sportings* of zeal, that holy dalliance with God, which swell the morning and evening devotions of many pious Christians. These desultory effusions are inconsistent with that reverence which is due to an Almighty Being.

In short: Let us, when we pray, be modest, humble, calm, and recollected; and let our forms of prayers be chaste, subdued, concise, and pertinent.

When we approach the Almighty, let us not borrow our ideas of him from human characteristics: let us remember, *that his ways are not our ways, neither are his thoughts our thoughts; — that as much as heaven is higher than the earth, so much are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts.* This reflection will at all times teach us a becoming reverence for our glorious Creator; and particularly, in our addresses to him, it will suggest to us the impropriety of vain and impertinent declamation, of the ostentatious effusions of fanatic impudence, and the importunate familiarities of forward zeal.

Adieu! my Constantia. May you offer up your prayers in an acceptable time!

FRANCIS.

LETTER

LETTER X.

CONSTANTIA TO THEODOSIUS.

YOUR letters displease me, my paternal friend, they make me displeased with myself. Every page is a mirror that reflects some circumstance of folly or ignorance in my past conduct. When I compare my opinions and my practice with those which you recommend, I am mortified with beholding some essential difference.—But go on, dear, cruel instructor, go on to humble the proud heart of your Constantia; make her see in yet many more instances, what a weak, ignorant, short-sighted creature she is.

But indeed you ought to conquer that vanity, which in former days you contributed to strengthen; when, too prodigal of compliment, you would overrate the talents of your Constantia; and, in the humility of tender affection, would profess yourself her pupil! Be patient, and indulge me. You make me sensible of my weakness: I am yet a woman, and must complain; I will have my revenge, and convince *you* of your errors. Do I not owe much of my pride and vanity to you? Did you not, in the days of flattering love, cherish and support those unserviceable foibles? Having no other ambition than to please Theodosius, if he appeared satisfied with my accomplishments, I thought them sufficient: if he praised my talents, I believed them to be great; and was indifferent about new acquisitions of knowledge. Thus, my friend, I bring a heavy charge against you, and impute to you, in some measure, my pride and ignorance. Thus it is, that while your letters convince me of the latter, I gratify the first by a flattering excuse. Poor Constantia! how much of human weakness dost thou yet retain!

You have much to do, my venerable guide, much to do, before you shall have rendered your pupil as wise and as good as she ought to be.

What means this uneasiness that hangs upon my heart? Surely your letter, your valuable letter, could not cause it. And yet I think, I had less pleasure from it than from any other that you have written to me. Was it because you have not so often appealed to me by the endearing name of *your*

Constantia? To you, my confessor, my guide, and friend, I can open all my weakness. What means this uneasiness that hangs upon my heart?

CONSTANCE.

LETTER XI.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

AMIABLE tenderness! Dear Constantia! set your heart at ease. Exert your reason; tax your fortitude; call forth the nobler faculties of your mind, and charge them to assert their empire over the wayward passions.

While we are in this state of being, we must encounter difficulties, and struggle with uneasiness. The heart will often be dissatisfied we know not why, and reason will stand an idle spectator, as if unconscious of its power. In such cases it ought to be awakened from its lethargy, and reminded of the task to which it is appointed. It should be informed of the high office it bears in the œconomy of the soul, and be made acquainted with the insidious vigilance of its enemies.

But while we languish under the uneasiness of discontent, we cannot take a more effectual method to recover our peace, than to consider the insignificance of every passion that centers, and pursuit that terminates here. Suppose our earthly aims were directed to their object by the favouring gale of fortune; suppose our pursuits should be crowned with all the success that flattering hope assigns them; yet, vain, changeable, and impotent as we are, the success would not be worth a moment's triumph. While the heart turns upon an earthly axis, like the perishable ball that it loves, it will be variously affected by outward influences. Sometimes it will bear the fruits of gladness, and sometimes be the barren desert of melancholy; one while it will be exhilarated by the sunshine of pleasure, and again it will languish in the gloom of discontent. The cause of this is, not only that the human heart is in itself changeable and uncertain, deriving its sensations from constitutional influences, but that the objects, if they are earthly objects, on which it depends for happiness, are liable to variation and decay.

Hence

Hence arises the superiority of religious views. When our hopes of happiness are fixed on one certain event; one event which, though remote, cannot be altered by mortal contingencies, the heart has an invariable foundation whereon it may rest. Without this resting-place, we should be *tossed to and fro with every wind* of fortune, the sport of chance, and the dupes of expectation. To this immovable anchor of the soul religion directs us in the hopes of immortality. We know from the unerring word of Divine Revelation, that we shall exist in another state of being, after the dissolution of this; and we are confirmed by every benevolent purpose of Providence, in the belief that our future existence shall be infinitely happy. In this glorious hope the interests of a temporary life are swallowed up and lost. This hope, like the serpent of Aaron, devours the mock-phantoms which are created by the magick of this world, and at once shews the vanity of every earthly pursuit.

Compared with this prospect, my Constantia, how poor, how barren would every scene of mortal happiness appear! How despicable at the best—yet how liable to be destroyed by every storm of adversity! For, are we not exposed to a thousand accidents, the most trifling of which may be sufficient to break a scheme of felicity? Let us consider those conditions that are almost universally desired, the dignity of the great, and the affluence of the rich. Are these above the reach of misfortune? Are they exempt from the importunities of care? Greatness is but the object of impertinence and envy, and riches create more wants than they are able to gratify. Should then our wishes lead to these, we should unavoidably be disappointed. The acquisition might for a while soothe our vanity, but we should soon sigh for the ease of obscurity, and envy the content of those whom pride would call our vassals.

If wealth or grandeur, then, cannot afford us happiness, where shall we seek it? Is it to be found in the cell of the hermit? or does it watch by the taper of solitary learning? Loves it the society of laughing mirth? or does it affect the pensive pleasures of meditation? Is it only genuine in the cordiality of friendship, or in the lasting ten-

derness of married love? Alas! my Constantia, this train of alternatives will not do. Should we fly from the trouble of society to some lonely hermitage, we should soon sigh for the amusements of the world we had quarrelled with. The strongest mind could not long support the burden of uncommunicated thought, and the firmest heart would languish in the stagnation of melancholy.

Ask the solitary scholar, if ever, in his learned researches, he beheld the retreat of happiness—Amusement is all that he will pretend to—Amusement! in quest of which the active powers of the mind are frequently worn out, the understanding enervated by the assiduity of attention, and the memory overburdened with unessential ideas.

Yet, possibly, happiness may mingle with society, and swell the acclamations of festive mirth. No; the joy that dwells there cannot be called happiness; for the noise of mirth will vanish with the echo of the evening, and *even in laughter the heart is sad*. If we are able to distinguish the elegance of conversation, we shall often be disgusted with the arrogance of pride, or the impertinence of folly; and if not, we may be amused indeed with the noise, but can never taste the pleasures of society.

As little reason have we to hope for lasting happiness from the engagements of friendship or of love. The condition of human life is at best so uncertain, that it is even dangerous to form any connections that are dear. The tenderness of love, my Constantia, opens the heart to many sufferings, to many painful apprehensions for the health and safety of its object, and many uneasy sensations both from real and imaginary causes. It was from this conviction I told you, in the letter wherein I first discovered myself to you, ‘that the love we have had for one another will make us more happy in its disappointment, than it could have done in its success.’

For want of a better remedy to these evils, the wisdom of ancient philosophy teacheth us to bid a brave defiance to the assaults of pleasure and of pain. This precept it urges with unremitting austerity; without making any allowance for particular tempers or circumstances; without instructing us how to behave

behave to the solicitations of joy or pleasure; how to defend the heart from the inroads of sorrow, or guard against the unseen stratagems of distress.

But the religion of a Christian affords a nobler and a safer refuge. With the exalted hopes that this presents to us, *the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared.* In those glorious hopes let us bury every anxious thought, the uneasiness of discontent, and the solicitude of care. Let us not sink under our light afflictions, which are but for a moment. A very few years, perhaps a few months or days, may bring us into that state of being, where care and misery perplex no more. *Though we have now our bed in darkness, and our pillow on the thorn,* yet the time draweth nigh when we shall taste of life without anguish, and enjoy the light without bitterness of soul. *The night is far spent, my Constantia, the day is at hand; let us therefore gird up the loins of our mind, and be sober*—no longer dissipated, or disturbed with the troubles of this world. We are hourly hastening to that scene of existence, *where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest*; where hope shall no more be cut off by disappointment, and where the distresses of time are forgot in the joys of eternity.

FRANCIS.

LETTER XII.

CONSTANTIA TO THEODOSIUS.

IS it thus that you hope to reform your Constantia? Do you think that you shall be able to effect this by letting her foibles pass uncensured, and conveying instruction to her in general terms? Alas! how little do you know of her petulant and capricious heart! It must be corrected with severity, and quieted by overbearing reproof.

At present, indeed, it is sufficiently depressed. Your observations on the folly and vanity of expecting happiness in this world, came to me at a time when painful experience convinced me of their truth.

After Theodosius was lost to me, I contracted a friendship with an amiable and accomplished woman, to whom my melancholy and my misfortunes

served only to endear me the more. Her good sense and her compassion soothed and supported me under all my sufferings. She left me not to the attacks of solitary discontent, but assiduously diverted my mind by the efforts of elegant humour, polished sense, and ingenious observation. As if she had preferred the company of sorrow to every social amusement, even in that season of life when the heart of health and peace is always gay, she never forsook me during the last five unhappy years. She observed, with unwearied vigilance, the hour when melancholy apprehension was increased to the acuteness of grief. She then followed me into whatever privacy I sought; clasped me to her faithful bosom; and if, under the agonies of terror and anguish, tears refused their assistance, she solicited, and obtained them by her infectious tenderness. When, at last, I determined to take the veil, and had obtained my father's consent to forsake the world for ever, her affection followed me in that final resolution. She waited only for an approaching opportunity to settle her worldly affairs, after which she intended to have made one of our sisterhood, and to have passed the remaining part of her life with her Constantia.

Upon this event my heart reposed. I foresaw in this a scene of happiness that could not be equalled upon earth, and I flattered myself that it would be as lasting as my own life. How many pleasing hours have I passed in meditating on the future felicity of our friendship! How often, in the luxury of imagination, have I considered our united prayers ascending more acceptably to the Throne of everlasting Mercy! What joy did I promise myself, what importance in the eye of friendship, by communicating to my Sophia all the instructions I had received from my Theodosius.

Oh, my friend! my father! these hopes are overthrown. Do I live to tell you by what means? Sophia, my tender, my dear Sophia, is no more! The uneasiness I expressed in my last proceeded probably in some measure from my presentiments of this cruel event. I am now very miserable, and in great need of your paternal advice.

CONSTANCE.

LETTER XIII.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

AS true friendship is one of the greatest blessings of human life, our sorrow for the loss of friends is more excusable than most of our complaints. But, though it may be more venial, it is not more reasonable than any other mode of misery that has its origin in disappointment. Did we think our friends immortal? Did we not know, while we held them to our hearts, that we were embracing the property of death, who would sooner or later assert his claim?

Our resignation to this, as well as to all other evils, ought to be confirmed by reflecting on the universal agency of Providence. The author of the book of Psalms furnishes us with excellent doctrine on this subject. We have scarce any where such striking pictures of human misery as in that book. The royal writer has described, in the strongest colours, the distresses and perplexities to which, as men, we are subject. He has descended to the private dissatisfactions of the heart, and recounted many circumstances of accidental calamity. Hence it is that his writings are of general use. Of the distresses that are incident to our being, though the prospect be gloomy, it is necessary we should observe it; as he who must make his way through pitfalls and precipices, would chuse a plan of the road he was to travel, rather than march blindly forward without knowledge and without caution.

But these are not all the instructions which the Psalmist affords us. We are seldom presented with an afflicted prospect of life, without being directed to the means of comfort. We are told that, however great the causes of our affliction may be, they are subject to the wise directions of a Being benevolent to man; and that, though *heaviness may endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning*. The doctrine of an universal providence, which is the only source of consolation under every species of misery, is asserted through this whole book with the greatest confidence of certainty.

'Who is like unto the Lord our God, who hath his dwelling so high,

'and yet humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and earth?

'Thou shalt shew us wonderful things in thy righteousness, O God of our salvation! Thou that art the hope of all the ends of the earth, and of them that remain in the broad sea.

'They also that dwell in the uttermost parts of the world shall attend to thy tokens. Thou that makest the out-goings of the morning, and the evening to praise thee.'

In this belief of the universal agency of Providence the Psalmist places the remedy of moral and natural evil.

'Should I find trouble and heaviness, I will call upon the name of the Lord. O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul!

'The Lord preserveth the innocent: I was in misery, and he helped me.

'The proud, O Lord, have had me exceedingly in derision, but I remembered thy everlasting judgments, and received comfort.'

The last sentiment ought to be engraven upon the hearts of all the children of affliction.

Let us remember that God is the Supreme Governor of the universe; that under his direction is the whole system of nature, by him animated, connected, supported. Let us consider that the agency of man in this system is only moral. The oeconomy of life is committed to him so far as it may exercise his moral will: but the events of his actions are finally under the determination of the Almighty. Were not HE to direct the natural course of this world, even in those circumstances of it that are or may be affected by the moral power of man, order could no more be preserved in the universe, than it could at first result from chance, or be formed by the direction of fallible beings.

This consideration, that the Supreme Power has in his own hands the oeconomy of the world, ought to engage our resignation under every circumstance of life: for, should we quarrel with the dispensations of him who gave us being? Should we dispute the regulations of that power, who has provided the means of this day's subsistence, and without whose favour and protection we could no longer exist? Is not he who made the world best able to govern it?

it? Has not he who gave us this being a right to resume it?

What mean, then, the pangs of disappointment? What mean the languishing complaints of sorrow? The tears that flow for buried virtue, and the sighs that mourn for parted friendship?

But to these questions you will say others may be opposed. You will ask if these emotions ought to be excluded from the human heart, when they are evidently the effect of nature? You will enquire whether the God of nature would plant affections in his creatures, which to stifle would be a virtue?

To these questions I would reply, that those affections for the objects of this world, which we have received with our being, may be indulged, but under certain limitations. Let us always consider the end of such affections. Certainly it could not be to create us misery, when those objects are no more; for that would be indirectly to repine at the dispensations of him who has removed them from us.

The voice of nature will be heard, and our tears will flow when our dearest connections are broken. In this we only act like men: but when sorrow is long indulged, it becomes criminal; for then we tamely give ourselves up to those passions which it is our duty to restrain, and act in petulant opposition to the decrees of Providence.

Human life must have many avenues to sorrow and anxiety, while we are concerned for the welfare of those objects which have engaged our affections, or the success of those schemes on which all our wisdom has been employed. The duty of resignation, therefore, like every other that is enjoined us, is calculated to promote our own happiness. When we *remember the everlasting judgments of God*, we may reasonably *be filled with comfort in every event*.

'It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth unto him good. It is the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abundant in goodness, and in truth.'

'Why should ye say unto my soul, that she should flee as a bird unto the hill? Behold the Lord, the Lord of Hosts is my refuge; the God of Jacob is on my right-hand.'

Under such confidence as this; what have we to fear, and for what should we sigh? That misfortunes seem to

counteract our schemes of happiness, and that the prospects of hope are cut off by disappointment; we might mourn indeed, were this the only scene of our existence, and were our views terminated by our departure from it. That human knowledge is often inadequate to the purposes of life, and always imperfect, would be a melancholy consideration, were it not attended with the prospect of an existence, where knowledge as well as happiness, shall flow from the fountain of Infinite Perfection.

This reflection might, one should think, be sufficient to set our hearts at ease with respect to temporary misfortunes; but still more powerful will be the motives to resignation, when we consider that the Father of heaven has not only promised us a safe retreat at last from our afflictions, but to support us under them.

'These things have I said unto you, that in me ye might have peace: in the world ye shall have tribulation.'

'Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them falleth not to the ground without the permission of my Father who is in heaven. Are not ye of more value than many sparrows?'

That man in the system of nature has a peculiar regard shewn him, it would be superfluous to observe. None of us can be so blind to the bounties we enjoy, nor to the eminent prerogatives by which we are distinguished. But I may infer, that as the favour of the Almighty is so evidently seen in man, his confidence in him, under every circumstance of life, ought to be in proportion. If he is distinguished by the light of reason, he ought not surely to make that light an instrument to censure the perfection from which it flows—yet discontent is a kind of censure on Providence.

Alas! my dear Constantia, how mistaken is the man, how much an enemy to his own happiness, who confides not in the measures, nor resigns to the dispensations of his Creator: he robs himself at once of that sovereign remedy of evil, reliance on a superior power. He is involved in calamities without the alleviation of hope, and subject to misfortunes without redress.

But happy, above all names of happiness, is he who with grateful humility submits to the determinations of God. The vicissitudes of fortune cannot dis-

tres him. He is secure in the care of Almighty Goodness. Nature may shrink back from the stroke of affliction, but the conflict that is supported by hope can neither be long nor painful.

'Why art thou so full of heaviness,
'O my soul, and why art thou so dis-
'quieted within me? Trust in God.'

The great object of his hope, the perfect happiness of a future existence, he knows, cannot be very distant—that he has but to travel a few days longer till he reach the mansions of everlasting rest, where the miseries and delusions of mortality shall vanish, and *sorrow and mourning shall flee away*. Adieu, my Constantia! Think of these things, and be happy.

FRANCIS.

LETTER XIV.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

WITHOUT waiting any return to my last, I once more sit down to write to you. I would in some measure imitate that dear and valuable friend you have lost, whose assiduous tenderness, you say, would never leave you to the attacks of solitary sorrow. This was wisely done when your grief had continued unreasonably long; but I am always of opinion, that under the first stages of sorrow the mind should be left to itself; and would our common rules permit me to visit you, I should decline it till the violence of your grief subsided.

The objection, however, does not lie with the same force against writing to you. We can better bear the sentiments of our friends, when they are not personally witnesses to our weakness.

My design at present is not to instruct but to amuse you. I therefore send you poetry instead of philosophy; or rather, indeed, philosophy harmonized; for the sentimental part of the following composition is truly noble.

P S A L M CVII.

YET once more wake the strain of grateful praise,
To that Eternal Power whose mercy shines
O'er all his works, immortal! Let them wake
The grateful strain once more, those happier
sons,

Whom his hand rescued from the hostile chain

Of old captivity! From climes remote,
From the first openings of the orient day,
From Hesper's silver flood-gates, from the star
That shoots its pale rays o'er the shivering north,

From Egypt's tyrant shores, his parent voice
Their scattered trains assembled. Long they
stray'd

Thro' wild woods unfrequented; long—nor
found

City, or safe abode; till nature sunk
With meagre want oppress'd, and the faint pulse
Of life beat weakly. Then, with humble
prayer

To Heaven they turn'd repentant; nor un-
heard.

Eternal Mercy led the wanderers forth
To habitable towns, and safe abodes.

O for the spirit of exalted praise,
To blazon high those acts of power divine,
Those boundless mercies that embrace
mankind!

They, thrice unhappy! o'er whose joyless
heads

Grim darkness hovers, they who lonely dwell
In Death's uncheerful shade, afflicted, bound
In cold imprisoning chains, the sad reward
Of impious, daring, and rebellious deeds,
When heavenly Justice, with her radiant arm
Smites their proud hearts; e'en they, by
humble prayer,

Unfold sweet Mercy's easy-sliding gates;
Their iron bondage bursts, and forth they rush
From Death's dim shadow to the golden day.

O for the spirit of exalted praise,
To blazon high those acts of power divine,
Those boundless mercies that embrace
mankind!

Folly's vain votaries, from disorder wild,
And mad intemperance, reaping painful
fruits,

Disease and languor, to the dreary door
Of Death move trembling.—Then with
humble prayer

To Heaven they turn repentant, nor unheard.
Health's rosy light relumes the languid cheek,
And Ruin quits his meditated prey.

O for the spirit of exalted praise,
To blazon high those acts of power divine,
Those boundless mercies that embrace
mankind!

Let man for ever wake the grateful strain,
The sacrifice of reason; ever sing
His Maker's works, and triumph in the song.

The bold adventurers, on the stormy breast
Of ocean, tenants of the wat'ry world,
Mark

Mark in the mighty waste of seas and skies,
Magnificence Divine. At his command
The swift wind sweeps the billows; up they
rise

Infuriate to the vault of heaven, then down
Precipitately steep, disparting, ope
The vast abyfs voracious. Ah! where then,
Weak mariners, your hopes? Then the heart
faints.

From side to side they run, they reel, they fall,
Inebriate with confusion. Nought remains
But trembling prayer, the last appeal to Hea-
ven.

Nor vain the last appeal. Already, see!
The rapid storm subsides, and the wave sleeps.
Alert within the merry sailor's heart
Springs hope; and soon he hails the welcome
port.

O for the spirit of exalted praise,
To blazon high those acts of power divine,
Those boundless mercies that embrace
mankind!

From the full choir of undistinguish'd
crowds,

From Wisdom's chosen synod, crown'd with
years,

To him for ever flow collective praise!

Where in wild sweetness rose the sallying
springs,

Where spread the copious river, where dis-
play'd

The vale it's verdant honours, barren lies
A dry waste, mark of Heaven's avenging
hand;

When sacred Justice spoke the doom of guilt.

But lo! where once the dry waste barren lay,
There in wild sweetness flows the sallying
springs,

There spreads the copious river, there displays
The vale it's verdant honours; hamlets fair,
Rich harvests, blushing vineyards, golden
fruits,

And flocks abundant, the long-famish'd swain
Beholds delighted. Heaven's peculiar care
Are all Affliction's children: when the yoke
Of stern Oppression sinks the weary heart,
Perish the stern oppressors: low in dust,
Low lies each princely head; while guard-
ed safe,

As flocks reposing in their evening fold,
The peasant sleeps in peace. O sight of joy
To faithful Piety! of conscious pain,
And keen conviction, to the heart of guilt!

This, this is Wisdom's lesson: to explore
The active scheme of Providence; to learn
His love divine; and, learning, to confide.

There is no employment so delight-
ful to a devout mind as this attention to
the visible administration of Providence.

To contemplate the Creator of the
universe in the magnificence of his
works, enlarges and elevates the soul,
lifts it above the impertinence of vulgar
cares, and gives it a kind of heavenly
pre-existence. To consider the bene-
volent purposes for which he called
forth this variety and multitude of be-
ing, that comes under our cognizance,
must be a perpetual source of comfort.
A rational creature, that is conscious of
deriving it's existence from a Being of
infinite goodness and power, cannot pro-
perly entertain any prospect but of hap-
piness. By the imperfection of it's na-
ture it may fall into temporary evils,
but these cannot justly be the subject of
complaint, when we reflect that this
very imperfection was necessary to a pro-
batory life, and that, without it, there
could neither have been virtue, nor the
rewards of virtue. Every degree of
excellence depends upon comparison.
Were there no deformity in the world,
we should have no distinct ideas of beau-
ty: were there no possibility of vice,
there would be no such thing as virtue;
and were the life of man exempt from
misery, happiness would be a term of
which he could not know the meaning.

Adieu! Be wise and happy.

FRANCIS.

LETTER XV.

CONSTANTIA TO THEODOSIUS.

IF I could pronounce my heart to be
perfectly at ease, you would have the
only reward you desire for your pater-
nal care. But shall I, on the contrary,
avow my ingratitude? Shall I own that
this obstinate, this petulant heart, is
not yet at rest? Could it oppose itself
to the united efforts of reason and reli-
gion? Would it neither be soothed by
harmony, nor silenced by philosophy?
Vain, incorrigible heart!

Indeed, my venerable friend, I must
not dissemble with you: I have not yet
recovered my former peace. And yet,
why? I have the same confidence in
the administration of Providence. I be-
lieve as much in his goodness, as much
in his wisdom. I attend, with the same
readiness, on the duties of religion, and
offer up my prayers with the same assi-
duity. I agree to every conclusion you
have

have drawn either from moral or religious arguments. I acknowledge the propriety, the duty of resignation, under every circumstance of affliction, and yet I am afflicted. I see the absurdity of grief, yet I am grieved. What can I do more? I submit entirely to the dispensations of Providence. My will submits. I do not wish to call my departed friend to life: but this submission does not clear my heart of sorrow. Surely it has some connections which are not obedient to the will, and from which it derives involuntary pleasure or pain. Is not this true? We experience it in all instances of affection: we are sensible of attachments we cannot account for; and as those attachments are facilitated or interrupted, we are happy or miserable independently of reason or the will. If these observations are founded upon truth and nature, I hope I shall stand excused both before you, and at a higher tribunal, for those tears that have fallen over the grave of my Sophia.

Think not that I implicitly give myself up to the dominion of my Sorrow. I have been too well acquainted with it, not to know by what means it's influence is increased or abated. I do not deepen the gloom of melancholy by solitary reflection; I seek the society of the sisterhood, and endeavour to enter into their amusements, as well as to join their devotions. In those hours when I must necessarily be alone, if the uneasiness of my heart hinders the approach of sleep, I have recourse to my books; till at last the weariness of attention prevails over the force of sorrow, and procures me that rest which the latter would have prevented.

In the course of this reading, I have met with many things on which I wanted to consult you, but most of them have escaped me. Some of these, however, I remember. In a book of divinity, which, I suppose, must have been written by one of the heresy of Calvin, the author asserts that the 'Almighty' has appointed a day of grace to every man, beyond which there can be no 'remission of sin*.' I must own I was startled by this assertion, as it seemed to me to be very consequential. The following, I think, were some of the texts on which he founded this belief.

' Seek ye the Lord, while he may
' be found; call ye upon him, while
' he is near.

' Oh, that thou hadst known, even
' thou, in this thy day, the things that
' belong unto thy peace! But now they
' are hid from thine eyes.

' Again, he limiteth a day, saying,
' To-day, if ye will hear his voice,
' harden not your hearts.'

In another part of his book, he maintains that it is impossible for those who fall into sin, after having once been converted, to repent, or to be saved†. This doctrine he supports by the following passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

' It is impossible for those who were
' once enlightened, and have tasted of
' the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have
' tasted the good word of God, and the
' powers of the world to come; if they
' shall fall away, to renew them again
' unto repentance: seeing they crucify
' to themselves the Son of God afresh,
' and put him to open shame.'

To this passage he adds another, selected from the same book.

' If we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth,
' there remaineth no more sacrifice for
' sins, but a certain fearful looking-for
' of judgment, and fiery indignation,
' which shall devour the adversaries.
' He that despised Moses's law, died
' without mercy, under two or three
' witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be
' thought worthy, who hath trodden
' under foot the Son of God, and hath
' counted the blood of the covenant,
' wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite to
' the Spirit of Grace?'

I must own these texts appeared to me to make very strongly for his argument; and yet if these doctrines were generally received, I think they would open more avenues to despair; for many Christians, I fear, must have sinned wilfully after repentance and conversion. But, possibly, I do not behold these Scriptures in a right point of view. Let me hope for your kind instructions; and pray for you

CONSTANTIA.

* Many of our modern fanatics, methodists, &c. hold this doctrine.

† This is another doctrine of fanaticism.

LETTER XVI.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

YOU do well to amuse yourself by books and company; that amusement will divert your melancholy more effectually than any precepts of philosophy.

But what shall I say to your controversial studies? Shall I praise you for wearying your eyes over the pages of Calvinistick dreamers;—for honouring with your attention the groundless doctrines of narrow-sighted fanatics; who, either from want of knowledge or of candour, or more probably from want of both, have seized a limb of a text, and without attending either to the writer's design, or to the analogy of his reasoning, have founded upon the mere letter, doctrines that dishonour their God?

Such, and so founded, are those you have mentioned.

That God hath appointed a certain period in the life of man, beyond which he will not extend his grace to him, is a doctrine which is so far from having any foundation either in reason or revelation, that it is repugnant to the first, and totally unsupported by the latter.

The texts which your author has produced in support of his opinion, have no manner of connection with it.

'Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found; call ye upon him, while he is near.'

The whole chapter from which this passage is taken, refers to the time of the Messiah's first appearance. The prophet breaks out into raptures upon the view of that glorious æra; and apostrophizes to the people that should then be born, exhorting them not to lose the happy opportunity of making an interest with the Redeemer while he was personally present with them.

'O that thou hadst known, even thou, in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.'

This is Christ's apostrophe to Jerusalem, when he foretold it's approaching destruction. But what has this to do with the universal dispensation of Grace? The words are particularly applicable to the occasion on which they were spoken, and to the object where-

unto they were addressed. 'Unhappy city! I wish thou knewest, *in this thy day*, while thou art yet undestroyed, or while I am present with thee, *the things that belong unto thy peace*, thy everlasting peace, the mercies of redemption: *but now they are hid from thine eyes*; at this time thou perceivest them not.'

Or, possibly, *thy peace* may signify, thy temporal peace, and preservation from thine enemies; which interpretation the following verse seems to favour. 'But now they are hid from thine eyes. BECAUSE the days will come upon thee, when thine enemies,' &c. I incline to this sense; but whether this or the other be the true one, is quite immaterial to the œconomy of grace.

Let us now consider the last scripture which your author has adduced in favour of his doctrine.

'Again, he limiteth a day, saying, To-day, if ye will hear his voice.'

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in the chapter from whence this passage is taken, endeavours to prove the certainty of that final rest which still remained to the people of God. Thus he forms his argument; 'That there is a rest for the people of God into which they have not yet entered, appears from that prophetick psalm of David, which alludes to the time of Christ's appearance upon earth. The prophet, referring to that time, saith, To-day, if ye will hear his voice. You see he is determined as to the point of time; he limiteth or setteth apart a day: wherefore, from this passage it is apparent, that for you, Hebrews, for you the descendants of those who provoked God in the wilderness, and were not permitted to enter into his rest, a final rest still remains, to which you are invited.'

Thus it is, my Constantia, that the disciples of ignorance, folly and fanaticism, by disjoining and misconstruing the Scriptures, contrive their absurd doctrines; for instance, the tenet above-mentioned. Is it consistent with the justice or the goodness of God, who has appointed to man a life of probation, to limit the advantages, which, in his mercy, he has vouchsafed to him, to a shorter term than his life? While he leaves him still to contend with the enemies of his salvation, will he deprive him of his principal support, the

aid

aid of his grace? his grace, which he has promised to those that ask it, without exception, and without limitation?

I have done with the first tenet of your author; let us now see whether the second be better founded.

It is impossible, he maintains, for those who fall into sin, after having once been converted, to repent or to be saved: This opinion he supports by two passages from the Epistle to the Hebrews. Without making any remarks on the infallibility of that Epistle as a rule of faith, without taking notice of the difficulty and the late day of it's admission among the canonical books, I shall shew you that your author has made the passages he has selected from that book prove too much. What the writer of the Epistle means by *falling away*, in the first passage, and by *sinning wilfully* in the last, is the denial of the faith they had professed, and openly apostatizing from it. This is clear from the conclusion of both the passages. Those who *fall away* are said to *crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and to put him to open shame*. And he who *sinneth wilfully* is represented to *have trodden under foot the Son of God, to have counted the blood of the Covenant, where-with he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and to have done despite to the Spirit of Grace*.

From hence it appears, that for a downright apostate there is no hope of repentance or remission of sins. But your author has not confined this terrible denunciation to open apostacy. According to him, none who have fallen into sin after conversion are capable of being renewed by repentance, or saved by the redemption of Christ. This doctrine is equally unscriptural, and unreasonable.

Should man, circumstanced as he is, be exposed by frailty to final punishment, or reduced by accidentally falling into vice, to irretrievable ruin, he might either turn from the race that is set before him, in hopeless despondence, or vainly contend with danger and disgrace. The pilgrimage of human life is infinitely troublesome and perplexed. Dangers there are, and difficulties, which all must encounter, which can neither be eluded by vigilance, nor annihilated by contempt.

'A just man,' says the author of the

Book of Proverbs, 'falleth seven times, and riseth again.' In this place a certain, is put for an uncertain number; seven times being among the Jews an indefinite expression, used to signify any moderate number.

Our Saviour himself being asked how oft a brother should offend and be entitled to forgiveness, and whether or not till seven times, answered, 'Not until seven times, but till seventy times seven.' From this passage we have the utmost reason to hope, that whenever man shall effectually repent, the Divine Goodness will be ready to forgive him. For if we are commanded to receive into favour an offending brother, however frequently he may have trespassed against us, shall not our heavenly Father in like manner be ready to receive such as turn unto him? Shall God recommend such a conduct to man as he should not admit in himself? Are we not told, that the repentance of a sinner is unexceptionably so acceptable to the Almighty, that the angels in heaven rejoice, and congratulate their supreme and affectionate Creator on an event so agreeable to his gracious mind?

The prodigal in the Gospel returns not to his father till he had finished his course of riot, which was interrupted by nothing but his power to pursue it. He returns not till compelled by necessity, and therefore his repentance was not a voluntary virtue. But, behold, his father meets him while yet a great way off, and precludes his apologies by the most endearing reception. We have not, indeed, any account of a relapse in the accepted prodigal; but we are told that before the execution of his repentance, he said unto himself, 'How many hired servants of my father have bread enough, and to spare, while I perish with hunger!' Some such reflections he must frequently have made, when reduced to distress, and again probably must have quitted them from various motives.

We want not, however, this instance, to prove that a sinner may be restored to favour after falling away from his former resolutions and professions of obedience. The example of Peter is a sufficient proof in this case. To this I shall add another, which, though not of scriptural authority, is respectable, and very much to the present purpose.

Eusebius tells us, that Saint John, during

during his ministration to the western churches, cast his eye upon a young man remarkable for the extent of his knowledge, and the ingenuoufness of his mind. The aged apostle thought that he had discovered in him an useful instrument for the propagation of Christianity. Accordingly, he took particular pains to convert him, and to instruct him in the divine doctrines of his Great Master. That he might be still better acquainted with the system of Christianity, at his departure, he recommended him to the care of a pious old father, who had some authority in the infant church. The youth continued a while in the duties of his new profession, and attended with care to the lectures of his venerable tutor. But his former associates, when they found themselves deserted by him, were grieved at the success of the apostle, and exerted their utmost efforts to regain so useful and so entertaining a companion. They succeeded in their attempts, and the father was forsaken. The apostle, after some time, returned to those parts. 'Where,' said he, with impatience, to his aged friend, 'where, my fellow-labourer, is my favourite youth?'—'Alas,' replied the good old man, with tears in his eyes, 'he is fallen; irrecoverably fallen: he has forsaken the society of the saints, and is now the leader of a gang of robbers in the neighbouring mountains!' Upon hearing this unexpected and displeasing account, the apostle forgot his sufferings and his years, and hastened to the place of rendezvous; where, being seized by some of the band, he desired to speak with their captain. The captain being told that a strange pilgrim asked to be admitted to him, ordered him to be brought before him. But when he beheld the venerable apostle, his hopes of amusement were changed into shame and confusion; and the hardy leader of a band of robbers trembled before a poor unarmed old man. He quitted once more the society of wickedness, and lived and died in the service of his Redeemer.

From hence it is evident, that a relapse after repentance or conversion, was not looked upon by the primitive Christians, nor yet by the apostles themselves, as any means of excluding the future mercies of God.

An utter apostacy, an entire desertion

of the faith we have professed, and a contemptuous rejection of the grace we have received, may, according to the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, render us incapable of repentance, and utterly disqualify us for the future mercies of God. But sins inferior to these will not reduce us to the same dreadful circumstances. Our Creator *knoweth whereof we are made, he remembereth that we are but clay; and though we may fall, yet we shall not be cast away, since he upholdeth us with his hand.*

God preserve you, my amiable friend! preserve and direct you through the uncertain paths of this world, till you arrive at the realms of everlasting rest; till your innocent, your happy spirit, shall quit, without a sigh, the tender frame that confines it, and rise, conducted by some smiling angel, to the blessed society of good men made perfect! Adieu!

FRANCIS.

LETTER XVII.

CONSTANTIA TO THEODOSIUS.

THE everlasting doors of futurity are thrown open—the race of life is almost run, and this, probably, is the last time that your Constantia will have the happiness of pouring out her heart to you. I am seized with the first symptoms of that pestilential fever, which has been so universally fatal, that it brings with it almost the certainty of death. Now, therefore, before my faculties are overcome by the disease, I devote to you one hour more of a life in which you have had so great an interest.

In a situation like this it is natural to look back, and to take a view of the country through which we have travelled, before we lose sight of it for ever. The ways through which I have walked, though in many circumstances peculiar, and unlike the allotment of others, have yet, like others, been various, and different in the different periods of the journey. Before my present illness I drew up a short view of my life, part of which I will now transcribe, that with you it may serve as an apology for my conduct when I shall be no more.

I

AN

AN APOLOGY FOR THE LIFE OF
SISTER CONSTANCE; WRITTEN
BY HERSELF, AND ADDRESSED
TO FATHER FRANCIS.

YOU know how early I lost the best and most affectionate of mothers. That was a misfortune which, though then only bewailed with tears which had no meaning, left behind it a cloud that overshadowed the rest of my life. Had my infant years been trained by her, I should have acquired the habits of virtue from the influence of example. The want of this was much to be lamented, for there is a happy contagion in the power of living excellence, which, while we admire, we necessarily imitate. Those virtues which we draw from precept or speculation are seldom more than speculative; but those which we derive insensibly from the imitation of exemplary characters become lasting and habitual. But, besides the loss of a happy and an excellent pattern of every female virtue, I was deprived at the same time of those maternal cares, those tender assiduities, that watch over the young mind, accelerate the progress of reason, and supply the want of experience by precept. Of these advantages I was wholly destitute: for my father, inattentive to every thing but the acquisition of wealth, thought but little of the improvement of his daughter; or, if he thought of it at all, concluded that she would necessarily improve in proportion to the advancement of her fortune. Accordingly, I was abandoned to the common forms of female education, without those private attentions, those exemplary influences, which are of infinitely greater importance than all general instructions.

Thus unapprehensive and uninformed, in the first thoughtless advances from childhood to maturity, is it to be wondered that the amiable and accomplished Theodosius should find an easy admittance to a heart where every passion was awake, all unguarded, and none restrained?

But the severity of wisdom itself (prudence, you have told me, is but the ape of wisdom) could have had few objections against the passion that I entertained. For did it not receive a sanction from the object? What did I admire in Theodosius? Was it a symmetry of features? Was it not the piercing ge-

nious, and the cultivated mind? While his knowledge enlightened, his sensibility charmed me; and while at once he taught my heart and my mind to expand, is it to be wondered that he made room for himself? The powers of genius have an irresistible charm for taste; and while Theodosius was forming the mind of Constantia, he was cherishing a plant which, like the gourd of Jonah, as soon as it sprung up, would stretch its arms to embrace him.

When this intercourse of growing tenderness was at an end, when the obstinacy of ridiculous pride divided the families of Theodosius and Constantia, what did I not feel from the apprehension of being separated from the man I loved? Pride, however, came in to my aid; I shed a few angry tears, and commanded my heart to be at ease. But, alas! I soon found that Theodosius was dearer to me than I imagined. Yet even with this conviction, by the united influences of pride, and fear, and shame, my natural attachments to him were overborne; and, without consulting either my happiness or my inclination, I had the infatuation to acquiesce with that proposal of my father which banished Theodosius.

This was the most culpable circumstance of my life; a fault which indeed brought its punishment along with it, and for which the miseries of one period, and the penitence of another, have, I hope, made an adequate atonement.

The years that passed between that event and my admission into this holy retreat, were miserably worn away between the languor of melancholy, and the acuteness of grief: yet that plaintive and unresigned state of mind was not, I trust, accompanied with any great degree of guilt, since it was not at the dispensations of Providence that I murmured, but at the supposed consequences of my own folly. That I refused with resolute indignation the man, to whom, before, I had been so weak as not to deny my hand, was not enough to make satisfaction to my own heart. While I considered Theodosius as dead, and myself as in some measure the cause of his death, between the grief of affection, and the inquietude of conscience, I was at length reduced to the most pitiable state both of body and mind; the

the one emaciated with sorrow and watching, and the faculties of the other almost sunk in stupefaction.

Great distresses are the spectres of the mind, and, as it is fabled of the ghosts of self-murdered bodies, they hover over the scene where their object is intombed. Business and amusement, society and solitude, were alike impressed with the image of Theodosius: the painful idea pursued me through every avocation, nor could I find a retreat from it in the bosom of friendship. The sympathizing heart of my Sophia added new softness to my own, and the tenderness of her friendship made me feel more sensibly the loss of Theodosius.

At last that dear lamented friend, with some few more that pitied and regarded me, applied to my father for his permission that I might retire into a convent. Their generosity procured me what the voice of nature and the tears of duty had solicited in vain; and, by the irresistible offer of discharging the fees of my admission, they prevailed on the father of Constantia, that she might be permitted to take the veil.

Since I entered upon the conventual life, my conduct has been too well known to you, if not to need an apology, at least to be enlarged upon here. But after those aspirations of gratitude that rise to heaven, after those truly grateful sentiments which I must ever entertain for those beneficent friends who procured my establishment in this place, what words shall I find expressive of that gratitude which is due to Father Francis?—that tender, that affectionate father, who has nursed my mind with those paternal assiduities, which were somewhat above the most perfect nature of man, which could only flow from a heart where human sensibility was exalted and refined by the immortal graces, and where God himself elevated and expanded that philanthropy which he loves.

To the ever-venerable Father Francis I owe the greatest moral blessings that are attainable in this world—peace of conscience, and rectitude of reason. For the recovery of the first, indeed, little more was necessary than the certainty that Theodosius was alive and happy; but the consolations of the father add-

ed to the presence of the friend, replaced that quiet in my heart to which it had been so long a stranger. Those consolations, however, were not more soothing than the lessons that attended them were instructive. While from those I derived content and comfort, from these I received the lights of truth and reason, and was taught to look up with an intelligent adoration to that Being whose essence is Goodness and Wisdom. From the consideration of these distinguishing attributes, whenever he shall resume that life which he gave me, I shall resign it into his hands without sorrow, and without fear.

* * * * *

With difficulty I had written thus far, when the importunity of my disorder obliged me to lay down the pen. I have now resumed it, and will bear it as long as I am able; for while I hold but even an ideal conversation with you, the sense of pain is suspended. Other than bodily pain I have none. The presumption with which my apology concluded, I find, was not vain. I am perfectly indifferent to the approach of death, and agreeably to the kind wish with which you once* concluded a letter, I trust that 'my spirit shall quit, without a sigh, the frame that confines it.'

To you, my dearest friend, my most venerable father, loved by every dear, and respected by every sacred name, to you, under the gracious appointments of Providence, I owe this happy serenity. By giving me proper ideas of the Author of Nature, and the obligations of his creatures, you have taught me to look on death as one of his best gifts, and on all beyond it without any apprehension.

Behold here the reward of your pious labours! Behold with pleasure the resignation of a mind that you strengthened, of a heart that you armed against yourself.

'My heart was grieved, and it went even through my reins.

'So foolish was I and ignorant, even as it were an irrational creature before thee.

'Nevertheless I am always by thee, for thou hast holden me by my right hand.

* This last letter of Constantia, and the answer of Theodosius, seem to have been written some years after the preceding letters.

'Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and after that receive me in glory.'

'Whom *shall* I have in heaven but thee, for there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of thee?'

'My flesh, and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever!'

And now, dearest, and most revered of men, farewell! Whether we shall meet again in any future allotment of being, is amongst the sacred counsel of Providence. I trust we shall. Till then indulge one tender farewell from your Constantia! accept one pious, one grateful adieu, from

CONSTANCE.

LETTER XVIII.

THEODOSIUS TO CONSTANTIA.

LET not my Constantia be alarmed when she sees that this letter is written by another hand. Let not that fortitude with which she has so greatly supported her own sufferings, be dissolved in weakness for her friend; nor that noble tranquillity, with which she beholds the approach of death, be disturbed, when she is told that his hand is on Theodosius. I doubt not that the Eternal Providence, who, in his wisdom, interwove the interests and the passions of our lives, has, in his goodness, determined that they shall close together. If this be one of his gracious dispensations, I receive it not only with submission, but with gratitude. What more could I desire of the Divine Beneficence, than that, delivered from this prison of earth, I might accompany the spirit of my Constantia to the regions of everlasting happiness, to some more perfect appointment in the scale of being, where the immortal faculties shall be refined from human frailty, and where the powers of the soul shall be expanded by a nearer approach to that Perfection from which they are derived. Animated with hopes, and supported by sentiments like these, let us wait without fear the approach of Death, and receive him gladly, because he *cometh as a friend*. Indulge, my Constantia, the pleasing hope that our souls will know each other in their future allotment. The pure attachments of love and friend-

ship, founded upon and supported by esteem, may last beyond the grave, because they have their existence in the soul. And will not that Being, whose essence is love, support and cherish those connections which are agreeable to his commands, and those sentiments which are congenial with his own Divine Nature? Will he, who commanded us to *love one another*, extinguish in the grave those virtuous affections, which, when living, it was our duty to cultivate? It is not improbable that our happiness in heaven may, in some measure, consist in the harmonious intercourse of a perfect society; for I have no idea of a solitary happiness, even in the regions of perfection. Moreover, from what little accounts we find of the angelick state in the sacred writings, we see that the ideas of association and intercourse are always annexed to them. If then it is not to be doubted that in our future state we shall associate with some order of beings, can any thing be more probable than that we should mix with those kindred and congenial spirits, who, like ourselves, have had their appointments on earth, whether in different times and places, or the same? If in the same, which is still probable, and if the identity of our spiritual natures cannot be destroyed, why should not the characteristics of the soul be known in heaven as well as upon earth? I am willing to believe, at least, that the Eternal Goodness will permit this future knowledge; and though we know too little of the state of spirits to conceive the mode of their future communication, yet this we know, that it is in the power of God to permit what we wish for, and I trust that, in his kindness, he will permit it.

Then, my Constantia! for that state of exalted friendship, where the fears and frailties of mortality shall be known no more! for that happy intercourse of spiritual pleasures, which shall be no longer subject to the influences of chance or time; which shall neither be oppressed by languor, nor disturbed by anxiety! Compared with that ineffable complacency, that sublime delight, which even the hope alone of these things inspires, what are the sufferings, however peculiar, that we have hitherto endured? Were there, indeed, no future state of being to commence after this, who would not wish to be thus agreeably

ably deceived? Who would not wish to triumph over those gloomy apprehensions, which the thought of annihilation must necessarily create, in a being to whom nature has given the love of existence?

But if the foretaste of future happiness be so great; if, when only contemplated through the imperfect medium of human imagination, it is capable of inspiring such exalted delight, how inconceivably great must the real and perfect enjoyment be! Let us here, my Constantia, indulge the utmost stretch of hope; whatever an Almighty and all-beneficent Being can give, and whatever our glorified faculties can receive, let us suppose our own. He that giveth not of his Spirit by measure, he that openeth his hand, and shutteth it not again, shall not he freely give us all things?

When I consider the wisdom and benevolence of that Almighty Being, through whose kindness I have hitherto been supported in life, like my Constantia, I can walk without trembling through the dark valley of the shadow of death. And whence, but from the same consideration, could your tender

and apprehensive heart derive that more than manly firmness which is visible in your letter? That information which you so kindly ascribe to my instructions, you have drawn from your own experience of the wisdom and the goodness of Providence; to whom your gratitude is due for the rectitude of reason, as well as for every other blessing you enjoy.

I will now no longer withhold your mind from the meditation of that glorious Being, whose more visible favours we shall shortly obtain. Indeed, my faculties are already too much confused for regular thinking; and death, I find, makes hasty paces towards me. Accept my last blessing.

'Bless, O God! O Father of Nature, bless my Constantia! support her gentle spirit under the conflict of death! and lead her by the light of thy countenance to thy everlasting rest!'

And now—Oh! now—farewel, my Constantia!—my Constance! my sister! my friend! By every dear, and every holy name—farewel! I have conversed with you till the last moment.—But, —but we shall meet again. Adieu!



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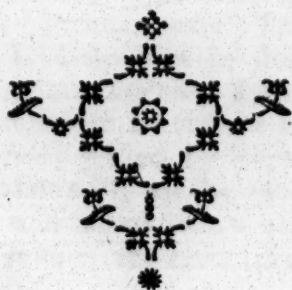
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THE
ADVENTURES
OF
FERDINAND COUNT FATHOM.

BY DR. SMOLLETT.

——MATERIAM RISUS, INVENIT AD OMNES
OCCURSUS HOMINUM.——
RIDEBAT CURAS, NEC NON ET GAUDIA VULGI;
INTERDUM ET LACHRYMAS FUNDEBAT.

IN TWO VOLUMES.



L O N D O N :

Printed for HARRISON and Co. No. 18, Paternoster-Row.

M DCC LXXXII.





TO

DOCTOR * * * * *

YOU and I, my good friend, have often deliberated on the difficulty of writing such a dedication as might gratify the self-complacency of a patron, without exposing the author to the ridicule or censure of the public; and I think we generally agreed that the task was altogether impracticable. Indeed, this was one of the few subjects on which we have always thought in the same manner: for, notwithstanding that deference and regard which we mutually pay to each other, certain it is, we have often differed, according to the predominancy of those different passions which frequently warp the opinion and perplex the understanding of the most judicious.

In dedication, as in poetry, there is no medium: for, if any one of the human virtues be omitted in the enumeration of the patron's good qualities, the whole address is construed into an affront, and the writer has the mortification to find his praise prostituted to very little purpose.

On the other hand, should he yield to the transports of gratitude or affection, which is always apt to exaggerate, and produce no more than the genuine effusions of his heart, the world will make no allowance for the warmth of his passion, but ascribe the praise he bestows to interested views and sordid adulation.

Sometimes, too, dazzled by the tinsel of a character which he has no opportunity to investigate, he pours forth the homage of his admiration upon some false Mæcenæ, whose future conduct gives the lye to his eulogium, and involves him in shame and confusion of face. Such was the fate of a late ingenious author *, who was so often put to the blush for the undeserved incense he had offered, in the heat of an enthusiastick disposition, misled by popular applause; that he had resolved to retract in his last will, all the encomiums which he had thus prematurely bestowed, and stigmatize the unworthy by name: a laudable scheme of poetical justice, the execution of which was fatally prevented by untimely death.

Whatever may have been the fate of other dedicators, I, for my own part, sit down to write this address, without any apprehension of disgrace or disappointment; because I know you are too well convinced of my affection and sincerity, to repine at what I shall say touching your character and conduct: and you will do me the justice to believe, that this publick distinction is a testimony of my particular friendship and esteem.

* The author of the Seasons.

Not that I am either insensible of your infirmities, or disposed to conceal them from the notice of mankind. There are certain foibles which can only be cured by shame and mortification; and whether or not yours be of that species, I shall have the comfort to think my best endeavours were used for your reformation.

Know, then, I can despise your pride, while I honour your integrity; and applaud your taste, while I am shocked at your ostentation. I have known you trifling, superficial, and obstinate in dispute; meanly jealous, and awkwardly reserved; rash and haughty in your resentments; and coarse and lowly in your connections. I have blushed at the weakness of your conversation, and trembled at the errors of your conduct. Yet, as I own you possess certain good qualities, which over-balance these defects, and distinguish you on this occasion as a person for whom I have the most perfect attachment and esteem, you have no cause to complain of the indelicacy with which your faults are reprehended; and as they are chiefly the excesses of a sanguine disposition and looseness of thought, impatient of caution or controul, you may, thus stimulated, watch over your own intemperance and infirmity, with redoubled vigilance and consideration, and for the future profit by the severity of my reproof.

These, however, are not the only motives that induce me to trouble you with this publick application. I must not only perform my duty to my friends, but also discharge the debt I owe to my own interest. We live in a censorious age; and an author cannot take too much precaution to anticipate the prejudice, misapprehension, and temerity, of malice, ignorance, and presumption.

I therefore think it incumbent upon me to give some previous intimation of the plan which I have executed in the subsequent performance, that I may not be condemned upon partial evidence; and to whom can I with more propriety appeal in my explanation, than to you, who are so well acquainted with all the sentiments and emotions of my breast?

A novel is a large diffused picture, comprehending the characters of life, disposed in different groupes, and exhibited in various attitudes, for the purposes of an uniform plan, and general occurrence, to which every individual figure is subservient. But this plan cannot be executed with propriety, probability, or success, without a principal personage to attract the attention, unite the incidents, unwind the clue of the labyrinth, and at last close the scene by virtue of his own importance.

Almost all the heroes of this kind, who have hitherto succeeded on the English stage, are characters of transcendent worth, conducted through the vicissitudes of fortune, to that goal of happiness, which ever ought to be the repose of extraordinary desert. Yet the same principle by which we rejoice at the remuneration of merit, will teach us to relish the disgrace and discomfiture of vice, which is always an example of extensive use and influence, because it leaves a deep impression of terror upon the minds of those who were not confirmed in the pursuit of morality and virtue, and while the balance wavers, enables the right scale to preponderate.

In the drama, which is a more limited field of invention, the chief personage is often the object of our detestation and abhorrence; and we are as well pleased to see the wicked schemes of a Richard blasted, and the perfidy of a Maskwell exposed, as to behold a Bevil happy, and an Edward victorious.

DEDICATION.

v

The impulses of fear, which is the most violent and interesting of all the passions, remain longer than any other upon the memory; and for one that is allured to virtue by the contemplation of that peace and happiness which it bestows, an hundred are deterred from the practice of vice, by that infamy and punishment to which it is liable, from the laws and regulations of mankind.

Let me not, therefore, be condemned for having chosen my principal character from the purlieus of treachery and fraud, when I declare my purpose is to set him up as a beacon for the benefit of the unexperienced and unwary, who from the perusal of these Memoirs, may learn to avoid the manifold snares with which they are continually surrounded in the paths of life; while those who hesitate on the brink of iniquity, may be terrified from plunging into that irretrievable gulph, by surveying the deplorable fate of Ferdinand Count Fathom.

That the mind might not be fatigued, nor the imagination disgusted by a succession of vicious objects, I have endeavoured to refresh the attention with occasional incidents of a different nature; and raised up a virtuous character, in opposition to the adventurer, with a view to amuse the fancy, engage the affection, and form a striking contrast, which might heighten the expression, and give a relief to the moral of the whole.

If I have not succeeded in my endeavours to unfold the mysteries of fraud, to instruct the ignorant, and entertain the vacant; if I have failed in my attempts to subject folly to ridicule, and vice to indignation; to rouse the spirit of mirth, wake the soul of compassion, and touch the secret springs that move the heart: I have at least adorned virtue with honour and applause; branded iniquity with reproach and shame, and carefully avoided every hint or expression which could give umbrage to the most delicate reader; circumstances which (whatever may be my fate with the public) will with you always operate in favour of,

Dear Sir,

Your very affectionate

Friend and servant,

T. SMOLLETT.

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, do hereby declare that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the original as the same appears in the records of the Court.

Witness my hand and seal this _____ day of _____, 19____.

Clerk of the Court

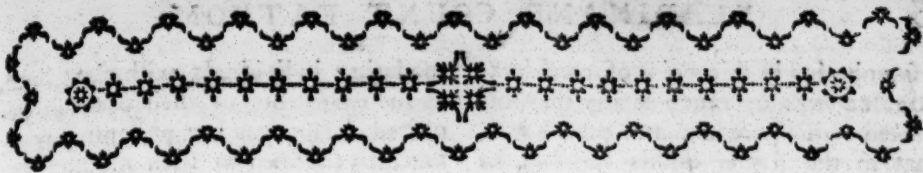
Notary Public

Attorney at Law

Witness

Witness

Witness



THE
ADVENTURES
OF
FERDINAND COUNT FATHOM.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

CHAP. I.

SOME SAGE OBSERVATIONS THAT
NATURALLY INTRODUCE OUR
IMPORTANT HISTORY.



ARDINAL De Retz very judiciously observes, that all historians must of necessity be subject to mistakes, in explaining the motives of those actions they record, unless they derive their intelligence from the candid confession of the person whose character they represent; and that, of consequence, every man of importance ought to write his own memoirs, provided he has honesty enough to tell the truth, without suppressing any circumstance that may tend to the information of the reader. This, however, is a requisite that, I am afraid, would be very rarely found among the number of those who exhibit their own portraits to the publick: indeed, I will venture to say, that how upright soever a man's intentions may be, he will, in the performance of such a task, be sometimes misled by his own phantasy, and represent objects as they appeared to him through the mists of prejudice and passion.

An unconcerned reader, when he peruses the history of two competitors, who lived two thousand years ago, or who, perhaps, never had existence, except in the imagination of the author, cannot help interesting himself in the

dispute, and espousing one side of the contest, with all the zeal of a warm adherent. What wonder, then, that we should be heated in our own concerns, review our actions with the same self-approbation that they had formerly acquired, and recommend them to the world with all the enthusiasm of paternal affection?

Supposing this to be the case, it was lucky for the cause of historical truth, that so many pens have been drawn by writers, who could not be suspected of such partiality; and that many great personages, among the ancients as well as moderns, either would not, or could not, entertain the public with their own memoirs. From this want of inclination or capacity to write, in our hero himself, the undertaking is now left to me, of transmitting to posterity the remarkable adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom; and by that time the reader shall have glanced over the subsequent sheets, I doubt not, but he will bless God, that the adventurer was not his own historian.

This mirror of modern chivalry was none of those who owe their dignity to the circumstances of their birth, and are consecrated from the cradle for the purposes of greatness, merely because they are the accidental children of wealth. He was heir to no visible patrimony, unless we reckon a robust constitution, a tolerable appearance, and an uncommon capacity, as the advantages of inheritance. If the compa-

rison

rison obtains in this point of consideration, he was as much as any man indebted to his parents; and pity it was, that in the sequel of his fortune, he never had an opportunity of manifesting his filial gratitude and regard. From this agreeable act of duty to his sire, and all those tenderesses that are reciprocally enjoyed betwixt the father and the son, he was unhappily excluded by a small circumstance; at which, however, he was never heard to repine. In short, had he been brought forth in the fabulous ages of the world, the nature of his origin might have turned to his account; he might, like other heroes of antiquity, have laid claim to divine extraction, without running the risk of being claimed by any earthly father; not that his parents had any reason to disown or renounce their offspring, or that there was any thing preternatural in the circumstances of his generation and birth; on the contrary, he was from the beginning a child of promising parts, and in due course of nature, ushered into the world amidst a whole cloud of witnesses: but, that he was acknowledged by no mortal sire, solely proceeded from the uncertainty of his mother, whose affections were so dissipated among a number of admirers, that she could never pitch upon the person from whose loins our hero sprung.

Over and above this important doubt, under which he was begotten, other particularities attended his birth, and seemed to mark him out as something uncommon among the sons of men. He was brought forth in a waggon, and might be said to be literally a native of two different countries; for, though he first saw the light in Holland, he was not born till after the carriage arrived in Flanders; so that all these extraordinary circumstances considered, the task of determining to what government he naturally owed allegiance, would be at least as difficult, as that of ascertaining the so much contested birth-place of Homer.

Certain it is, the count's mother was an Englishwoman, who, after having been five times a widow in one campaign, was, in the last year of the renowned Marlborough's command, numbered among the baggage of the allied army, which she still accompanied, through pure benevolence of spirit, supplying the ranks with the refreshing streams of choice geneva, and accom-

modating individuals with clean linen, as the emergency of their occasions required. Nor was her philanthropy altogether confined to such ministration; she abounded with 'the milk of human kindness,' which flowed plentifully among her fellow-creatures; and to every son of Mars who cultivated her favour, she liberally dispensed her smiles, in order to sweeten the toils and dangers of the field.

And here it will not be amiss to anticipate the remarks of the reader, who, in the chastity and excellency of his conception, may possibly exclaim, 'Good Heaven! will these authors never reform their imaginations, and lift their ideas from the obscene objects of low life? Must the publick be again disgusted with the grovelling adventures of a waggon? Will no writer of genius draw his pen in the vindication of taste, and entertain us with the agreeable characters, the dignified conversation, the poignant repartee, in short, the genteel comedy of the polite world?'

Have a little patience, gentle, delicate, sublime critic; you, I doubt not, are one of those consummate connoisseurs, who, in their purifications, let humour evaporate, while they endeavour to preserve decorum, and polish wit, until the edge of it is quite wore off: or, perhaps of that class, who, in the sapience of taste, are disgusted with those very flavours, in the productions of their own country, which have yielded infinite delectation to their faculties, when imported from another clime; and damn an author in despite of all precedent and prescription. Who extol the writings of Petronius Arbiter, read with rapture the amorous sallies of Ovid's pen, and chuckle over the story of Lucian's Ass; yet, if a modern author presumes to relate the progress of a simple intrigue, are shocked at the indecency and immorality of the scene; who delight in following Guzman D'Alfarache, through all the mazes of squalid beggary; who with pleasure accompany Don Quixote and his squire, in the lowest paths of fortune; who are diverted with the adventures of Scarron's ragged troop of strollers, and highly entertained with the servile situations of Gil Blas; yet, when a character in humble life occasionally occurs in a performance of our own growth, exclaim with an air of disgust, 'Was ever any thing

thing so mean ! Sure, this writer must have been very conversant with the lowest scenes of life : who, when Swift or Pope represents a coxcomb in the act of swearing, scruple not to laugh at the ridiculous execrations ; but in a less reputed author, condemn the use of such profane expletives ; who eagerly explore the jakes of Rabelais, for amusement, and even extract humour from the Dean's description of a lady's dressing-room ; yet, in a production of these days, unstamped with such venerable names, will stop their noses with all the signs of loathing and abhorrence, at a bare mention of the China chamber-pot : who applaud Catullus, Juvenal, Persius, and Lucan, for their spirit in lashing the greatest names of antiquity ; yet, when a British satirist, of this generation, has courage enough to call in question the talents of a pseudo-patron, in power, accuse him of insolence, rancour, and scurrility.

If such you be, courteous reader, I say again, have a little patience ; for your entertainment we are about to write. Our hero shall, with all convenient dispatch, be gradually sublimed into those splendid connexions of which you are enamoured ; and God forbid, that in the mean time, the nature of his extraction should turn to his prejudice, in a land of freedom like this, where individuals are every day ennobled in consequence of their own qualifications, without the least retrospective regard to the rank or merit of their ancestors ! Yes, refined reader, we are hastening to that goal of perfection, where satire dares not shew her face ; where nature is castigated, almost even to still life ; where humour turns changeling, and flavers in an insipid grin ; where wit is volatilized into a mere vapour ; where decency, divested of all substance, hovers about like a fantastick shadow ; where the salt of genius, escaping, leaves nothing but pure and simple phlegm ; and the offensive pen for ever drops the mild manna of soul-sweetening praise.

CHAP. II.

A SUPERFICIAL VIEW OF OUR HERO'S INFANCY.

HAVING thus bespoken the indulgence of our guests, let us now produce the particulars of our entertain-

ment, and speedily conduct our adventurer through the stage of infancy, which seldom teems with interesting incidents.

As the occupations of his mother would not conveniently permit her to suckle this her first-born at her own breast, and those happy ages were now no more, in which the charge of nursing a child might be left to the next goat or she-wolf, she resolved to improve upon the ordinances of nature, and foster him with a juice much more energick than the milk of goat, wolf, or woman ; this was no other than that delicious nectar, which, as we have already hinted, she so cordially distributed from a small cask that hung before her, depending from her shoulders by a leathern zone. Thus determined, ere he was yet twelve days old, she enclosed him in a canvas knapsack, which being adjusted to her neck, fell down upon her back, and balanced the cargo that rested on her bosom.

There are not wanting those who affirm, that while her double charge was carried about in this situation, her cag was furnished with a long and slender flexible tube, which, when the child began to be clamorous, she conveyed into his mouth, and straight he stilled himself with sucking. But this we consider as an extravagant assertion of those who mix the marvellous in all their narrations, because we cannot conceive how the tender organs of an infant could digest such a fiery beverage, which never fails to discompose the constitutions of the most hardy and robust. We therefore conclude, that the use of this potation was more restrained, and that it was, with simple element, diluted into a composition adapted to his taste and years. Be this as it will, he certainly was indulged in the use of it to such a degree, as would have effectually obstructed his future fortune, had not he been happily cloyed with the repetition of the same fare, for which he conceived the utmost detestation and abhorrence, rejecting it with loathing and disgust : like those choice spirits, who, having been crammed with religion in their childhood, renounce it in their youth, among other absurd prejudices of education.

While he thus dangled in a state of suspension, a German trooper was transiently smit with the charms of his mother ; who listened to his honourable addresses,

addresses, and once more received the filken bonds of matrimony; the ceremony having been performed, as usual, at the drum-head. The lady had no sooner taken possession of her new name, than she bestowed it upon her son, who was thenceforward distinguished by the appellation of Ferdinand De Fathom: nor was the husband offended at this presumption in his wife, which he not only considered as a proof of her affection and esteem, but also as a compliment, by which he might in time acquire the credit of being the real father of such an hopeful child.

Notwithstanding this new engagement with a foreigner, our hero's mother still exercised the virtues of her calling among the English troops; so much was she biassed by that laudable partiality, which, as Horace observes, the *natale solum* generally inspires; indeed this inclination was enforced by another reason, that did not fail to influence her conduct in this particular: all her knowledge of the High Dutch language consisted in some words of traffick, absolutely necessary for the practice of her vocation; together with sundry oaths and terms of reproach, that kept her customers in awe; so that, except among her own countrymen, she could not indulge that propensity to conversation, for which she had been remarkable from her earliest years. Nor did this instance of her affection fail of turning to her account in the sequel. She was promoted to the office of cook to a regimental mess of officers; and before the peace of Utrecht, was actually in possession of a futtling-tent, pitched for the accommodation of the gentlemen in the army.

Meanwhile, Ferdinand improved apace in the accomplishments of infancy; his beauty was conspicuous, and his vigour so uncommon, that he was with justice likened unto Hercules in the cradle. The friends of his father-in-law dandled him on their knees, while he played with their whisks; and before he was thirteen months old, taught him to suck brandy impregnated with gunpowder, through the touch-hole of a pistol. At the same time, he was caressed by divers serjeants of the British army, who severally and in secret contemplated his qualifications with a father's pride, excited by the artful declaration with which the mother had flattered each apart.

Soon as the war was (for her unhappily) concluded, she, as in duty bound, followed her husband into Bohemia; and his regiment being sent into garrison at Prague, she opened a cabaret in that city, which was frequented by a good many guests of the Scotch and Irish nations, who were devoted to the exercise of arms in the service of the Emperor. It was by this communication that the English tongue became vernacular to young Ferdinand; who, without such opportunity, would have been a stranger to the language of his forefathers, in spite of all his mother's loquacity and elocution: though it must be owned, for the credit of her maternal care, that she let slip no occasion of making it familiar to his ear and conception; for, even at those intervals in which she could find no person to carry on the altercation, she used to hold forth in earnest soliloquies upon the subject of her own situation, giving vent to many opprobrious invectives against her husband's country, between which and old England she drew many odious comparisons; and prayed without ceasing that Europe might speedily be involved in a general war, so as that she might have some chance of re-enjoying the pleasures and emoluments of a Flanders campaign.

CHAP. III.

HE IS INITIATED IN A MILITARY LIFE, AND HAS THE GOOD FORTUNE TO ACQUIRE A GENEROUS PATRON.

WHILE she wearied Heaven with these petitions, the flame of war broke out between the houses of Ottoman and Austria, and the emperor sent forth an army into Hungary, under the auspices of the renowned Prince Eugene. On account of this expedition, the mother of our hero gave up house-keeping, and cheerfully followed her customers and husband into the field; having first provided herself with store of those commodities, in which she had formerly merchandized. Although the hope of profit might in some measure affect her determination, one of the chief motives for her visiting the frontiers of Turkey, was the desire of initiating her son in the rudiments of his

his education, which she now thought high time to inculcate, he being, at this period, in the sixth year of his age; he was accordingly conducted to the camp, which she considered as the most consummate school of life, and proposed for the scene of his instruction; and in this academy he had not continued many weeks, when he was an eye-witness of that famous victory, which, with sixty thousand men, the Imperial general obtained over an army of one hundred and fifty thousand Turks.

His father-in-law was engaged, and his mother would not be idle on this occasion. She was a perfect mistress of all the camp qualifications, and thought it a duty incumbent on her, to contribute all that lay in her power, towards distressing the enemy: with these sentiments she hovered about the skirts of the army, and the troops were no sooner employed in the pursuit, than she began to traverse the field of battle with a poignard and a bag, in order to consult her own interest, annoy the foe, and exercise her humanity at the same time. In short, she had, with amazing prowess, delivered some fifty or three-score disabled Mussulmen of the pain under which they groaned, and made a comfortable booty of the spoils of the slain, when her eyes were attracted by the rich attire of an Imperial officer, who lay bleeding on the plain, to all appearance in the agonies of death.

She could not, in her heart, refuse that favour to a friend and christian; she had so compassionately bestowed upon so many enemies and infidels, and therefore drew near with the sovereign remedy, which she had already administered with such success. As she approached this deplorable object of pity, her ears were surprized with an ejaculation in the English tongue; which he fervently pronounced, though with a weak and languid voice, recommending his soul to God, and his family to the protection of Heaven. Our Amazon's purpose was staggered by this providential incident; the sound of her native language, so unexpectedly heard, and so pathetically delivered, had a surprizing effect upon her imagination; and the faculty of reflection did not forsake her in such emergency: though she could not recollect the features of this unhappy officer, she concluded, from his appear-

ance, that he was some person of distinction in the service, and foresaw greater advantage to herself in attempting to preserve his life, than she could possibly reap from the execution of her first resolve. 'If,' said she to herself, 'I can find means of conveying him to his tent alive, he cannot but in conscience acknowledge my humanity with some considerable recompence; and should he chance to survive his wounds, I have every thing to expect from his gratitude and power.'

Fraught with these prudential suggestions, she drew near the unfortunate stranger, and in a softened accent of pity and condolance, questioned him concerning his name, condition, and the nature of his mischance, at the same time making a gentle tender of her service. Agreeably surprized to hear himself accosted in such a manner, by a person whose equipage seemed to promise far other designs, he thanked her in the most grateful terms for her humanity, with the appellation of kind countrywoman; gave her to understand that he was colonel of a regiment of horse; that he had fallen in consequence of a shot he received in his breast, at the beginning of the action; and finally intreated her to procure some carriage on which he might be removed to his tent. Perceiving him faint and exhausted with loss of blood, she raised up his head, and treated him with that cordial which was her constant companion: at that instant, espying a small body of hussars returning to the camp with the plunder they had taken, she invoked their assistance, and they forthwith carried the officer to his own quarters, where his wound was dressed; and his preserver carefully tended him until his recovery was completed.

In return for these good offices, this gentleman, who was originally of Scotland, rewarded her for the present with great liberality, assured her of his influence in promoting her husband, and took upon himself the charge of young Ferdinand's education: the boy was immediately taken into his protection, and entered as a trooper in his own regiment; but his good intentions towards his father-in-law, were frustrated by the death of the German, who, in a few days after this disposition, was shot in the trenches before Temiswaer.

This event, over and above the con-

jugal affliction with which it invaded the lady's quiet, would have involved her in infinite difficulty and distress, with regard to her temporal concerns, by leaving her unprotected in the midst of strangers, had not she been thus providentially supplied with an effectual patron in the colonel, who was known by the appellation of Count Melvil. He no sooner saw her, by the death of her husband, detached from all personal connections with a military life, than he proposed that she should quit her occupation in the camp, and retire to his habitation in the city of Presburg, where she would be entertained in ease and plenty during the remaining part of her natural life: with all due acknowledgments of his generosity, she begged to be excused from embracing his proposal, alledging she was so much accustomed to her present way of life, and so much devoted to the service of the soldiery, that she should never be happy in retirement, while the troops of any prince in Christendom kept the field.

The count finding her determined to prosecute her scheme, repeated his promise of befriending her upon all occasions; and in the mean time, admitted Ferdinand into the number of his domesticks, resolving that he should be brought up in attendance upon his own son, who was a boy of the same age. He kept him, however, in his tent, until he should have an opportunity of revisiting his family in person; and before that occasion offered, two whole years elapsed, during which, the illustrious Prince Eugene gained the celebrated battle of Belgrade, and afterwards made himself master of that important frontier.

CHAP. IV.

HIS MOTHER'S PROWESS AND DEATH, TOGETHER WITH SOME INSTANCES OF HIS OWN SAGACITY.

IT would have been impossible for the mother of our adventurer, such as she hath been described, to sit quietly in her tent, while such an heroick scene was acting. She was no sooner apprized of the general's intention to attack the enemy, than she, as usual,

packed up her moveables in a waggon, which she committed to the care of a peasant in the neighbourhood, and put herself in motion with the troops; big with the expectation of re-acting that part, in which she had formerly acquitted herself so much to her advantage. Nay, she by this time looked upon her own presence as a certain omen of success to the cause which she espoused; and in their march to battle, actually encouraged the ranks with repeated declarations, importing, that she had been eye-witness of ten decisive engagements, in all of which her friends had been victorious, and imputing such uncommon good fortune to some supernatural quality inherent in her person.

Whether or not this confidence contributed to the fortune of the day, by inspiring the soldiers to an uncommon pitch of courage and resolution, I shall not pretend to determine: but, certain it is, the victory began from that quarter in which she had posted herself; and no corps in the army behaved with such intrepidity as that, which was manifested by those who were favoured with her admonitions and example; for, she not only exposed her person to the enemy's fire, with the indifference and deliberation of a veteran, but she is said to have achieved a very conspicuous exploit by the prowess of her single arm. The extremity of the line to which she had attached herself, being assaulted in flank by a body of the spahis, wheeled about, in order to sustain the charge, and received them with such a seasonable fire, as brought a great number of turbans to the ground; among those who fell, was one of the chiefs, or aga's, who had advanced before the rest, with a view to signalize his valour.

Our English Penthesilea no sooner saw this Turkish leader drop, than, struck with the magnificence of his own and horse's trappings, she sprung forward to seize them as her prize, and found the aga not dead, though in a good measure disabled by his misfortune, which was entirely owing to the weight of his horse, that, having been killed by a musket-ball, lay upon his leg, so that he could not disengage himself. Nevertheless, perceiving the virago approach with fell intent, he brandished his scymitar, and tried to intimidate his assailant with a most horrible exclamation:



exclamation: but it was not the dismal yell of a dismounted cavalier, though enforced with a hideous ferocity of countenance, and the menacing gestures with which he waited her approach, that could intimidate such an undaunted the campaigner; she saw him writhing in the agonies of a situation from which he could not move; and, running towards him with the nimbleness and intrepidity of a Camilla, described a semicircle in the progress of her assault, and attacking him on one side, plunged her well-tried dagger in his throat. The shades of death encompassed him, his life-blood issued at the wound, he fell prone upon the earth, he bit the dust, and having thrice invoked the name of Alla, it straight expired.

While his destiny was thus fulfilled, his followers began to reel; they seemed dismayed at the fate of their chief, beheld their companions drop like the leaves in autumn, and suddenly halted in the midst of their career. The Imperialists observing the confusion of the enemy, redoubled their fire; and raising a dreadful shout, advanced in order to improve the advantage they had gained: the spahis durst not wait the shock of such an encounter; they wheeled to the right about, and clapping spurs to their horses, fled in the utmost disorder. This was actually the circumstance that turned the scale of battle. The Austrians pursued their good fortune with uncommon impetuosity, and in a few minutes left the field clear for the mother of our hero, who was such an adept in the art of stripping, that in the twinkling of an eye, the bodies of the aga and his Arabian, lay naked to the skin. It would have been happy for her, had she been contented with these first-fruits, reaped from the fortune of the day, and retired with her spoils, which were not inconsiderable; but, intoxicated with the glory she had won, inticed by the glittering caparisons that lay scattered on the plain, and, without doubt, prompted by the secret instinct of her fate, she resolved to seize opportunity by the forelock, and once for all indemnify herself for the many fatigues, hazards, and sorrows, she had undergone.

Thus determined, she reconnoitred the field, and practised her address so successfully, that in less than half an hour

she was loaded with ermine and embroidery, and disposed to retreat with her burden, when her regards were solicited by a splendid bundle, which she descried at some distance lying on the ground. This was no other than an unhappy officer of hussars; who, after having had the good fortune to take a Turkish standard, was desperately wounded in the thigh, and obliged to quit his horse: finding himself in such a helpless condition, he had wrapped his acquisition round his body, that whatever might happen, he and his glory should not be parted; and thus shrouded among the dying and the dead, he had observed the progress of our heroine, who stalked about the field, like another Atropos, finishing, wherever she came, the work of death. He did not at all doubt, that he himself would be visited in the course of her peregrinations, and therefore provided for her reception, with a pistol ready cocked in his hand, while he lay perdue, beneath his covert, in all appearance bereft of life. He was not deceived in his prognostick; she no sooner eyed the golden crescent, than inflamed with curiosity or cupidity, she directed thitherward her steps, and discerning the carcase of a man, from which, she thought, there would be a necessity for disengaging it, she lifted up her weapon, in order to make sure of her purchase; and in the very instant of discharging her blow, received a brace of bullets in her brain.

Thus ended the mortal pilgrimage of this modern Amazon; who, in point of courage, was not inferior to Semiramis, Tomyris, Zenobia, Thalestris, or any boasted heroine of ancient times. It cannot be supposed that this catastrophe made a very deep impression upon the mind of young Ferdinand, who had just then attained the ninth year of his age, and been for a considerable time weaned from her maternal caresses; especially, as he felt no wants nor grievances in the family of the count, who favoured him with a particular share of indulgence, because he perceived in him a spirit of docility, insinuation, and sagacity, far above his years. He did not, however, fail to lament the untimely fate of his mother, with such filial expressions of sorrow, as still more intimately recommended him to his patron; who being himself a man of extraordinary benevolence, looked upon the boy

as a prodigy of natural affection, and foresaw in his future services a fund of gratitude and attachment, that could not fail to render him a valuable acquisition to his family.

In his own country he had often seen connections of that sort, which having been planted in the infancy of the adherent, had grown up to a surprising pitch of fidelity and friendship; that no temptation could bias, and no danger dissolve. He therefore rejoiced in the hope of seeing his own son accommodated with such a faithful attendant, in the person of young Fathom, on whom he resolved to bestow the same education he had planned for the other, though conveyed in such a manner as should be suitable to the sphere in which he was ordained to move. In consequence of these determinations, our young adventurer led a very easy life, in quality of page to the count, in whose tent he lay upon a pallet, close to his field-bed, and often diverted him with his childish prattle in the English tongue, which the more seldom his master had occasion to speak, he the more delighted to hear. In the exercise of his function, the boy was incredibly assiduous and alert; far from neglecting the little particulars of his duty, and embarking in the mischievous amusements of the children belonging to the camp, he was always diligent, sedate, agreeably officious, and anticipating; and, in the whole of his behaviour, seemed to express the most vigilant sense of his patron's goodness and generosity: nay, to such a degree had these sentiments, in all appearance, operated upon his reflection, that one morning while he supposed the count asleep, he crept softly to his bedside, and gently kissing his hand, which happened to be uncovered, pronounced, in a low voice, a most fervent prayer in his behalf, beseeching Heaven to shower down blessings upon him, as the widow's friend and the orphan's father. This benediction was not lost upon the count, who chanced to be awake, and heard it with admiration; but, what rivetted Ferdinand in his good graces, was a discovery that our youth made, while his master was upon duty in the trenches before Belgrade.

Two foot-soldiers standing sentry near the door of the tent, were captivated with the sight of some valuable moveables belonging to it; and supposing, in their

great wisdom, that the city of Belgrade was too well fortified to be taken during that campaign, they came to a resolution of withdrawing themselves from the severe service of the trenches, by deserting to the enemy, after they should have rifled Count Melville's tent of the furniture by which they were so powerfully allured. The particulars of this plan were concerted in the French language, which, they imagined, would screen them from all risk of being detected, in case they should be overheard; though, as there was no living creature in sight, they had no reason to believe that any person was privy to their conversation. Nevertheless, they were mistaken in both these conjectures. The conference reached the ears of Fathom, who was at the other end of the tent, and had perceived the eager looks with which they considered some parts of the furniture. He had penetration enough to suspect their desire, and alarmed by that suspicion, listened attentively to their discourse, which from a slender knowledge in the French tongue, he had the good fortune partly to understand.

This important piece of intelligence he communicated to the count at his return, and measures were immediately taken to defeat the design, and make an example of the authors; who being permitted to load themselves with the booty, were apprehended in their retreat, and punished with death according to their demerits.

CHAP. V.

A BRIEF DETAIL OF HIS EDUCATION.

NOTHING could have more seasonably happened, to confirm the good opinion which the colonel entertained of Ferdinand's principles: his intentions towards the boy grew every day more and more warm; and immediately after the peace of Passarowitz, he retired to his own house at Presburg, and presented young Fathom to his lady, not only as the son of a person to whom he owed his life, but also as a lad who merited his peculiar protection and regard by his own personal virtue. The countess, who was an Hungarian, received him with great kindness and affability, and her son was ravished with the

the prospect of enjoying such a companion: in short, fortune seemed to have provided for him an asylum, in which he might be safely trained up, and suitably prepared for more important scenes of life, than any of his ancestors had ever known.

He was not, in all respects, entertained on the footing of his young master; yet he shared in all his education and amusements, as one whom the old gentleman was fully determined to qualify for the station of an officer in the service: and if he did not eat with the count, he was every day regaled with choice bits from his table; holding, as it were, a middle place, between the rank of a relation and favoured domestick. Although his patron maintained a tutor in the house, to superintend the conduct of his heir, he committed the charge of his learning to the instructions of a publick school; where, he imagined, the boy would imbibe a laudable spirit of emulation among his fellows, which could not fail of turning out to the advantage of his education. Ferdinand was entered in the same academy; and the two lads proceeded equally in the paths of erudition; a mutual friendship and intimacy soon ensued; and, notwithstanding the levity and caprice commonly discernable in the behaviour of such boys, very few, or rather no quarrels, happened in the course of their communication. Yet their dispositions were altogether different, and their talents unlike. Nay, this dissimilarity was the very bond of their union; because it prevented that jealousy and rivalry which often interrupts the harmony of two warm cotemporaries.

The young count made extraordinary progress in the exercises of the school, though he seemed to take very little pains in the cultivation of his studies; and became a perfect hero in all the athletick diversions of his fellow-scholars; but, at the same time, exhibited such a bashful appearance and uncouth address, that his mother despaired of ever seeing him improved into any degree of polite behaviour. On the other hand, Fathom, who was in point of learning a mere dunce, became, even in his childhood, remarkable among the ladies for his genteel deportment and vivacity; they admired the proficiency he made under the directions of his dancing-master, the air with which he performed

his obeisance at his entrance and exit; and were charmed with the agreeable assurance and lively sallies of his conversation: while they expressed the utmost concern and disgust at the boorish demeanour of his companion, whose extorted bows resembled the pawings of a mule; who hung his head in silence, like a detected sheep-stealer; who sat in company under the most awkward expressions of constraint; and whose discourse never exceeded the simple monosyllables of negation and assent.

In vain did all the females of the family propose to him young Fathom, as a pattern and reproach: he remained unaltered by all their efforts and expostulations, and allowed our adventurer to enjoy the triumph of his praise; while he himself was conscious of his own superiority in those qualifications which seemed of more real importance than the mere exteriors and forms of life. His present ambition was not to make a figure at his father's table, but to eclipse his rivals at school, and to acquire an influence and authority among these confederates. Nevertheless, Fathom might possibly have fallen under his displeasure or contempt, had not that pliant genius found means to retain his friendship by seasonable compliances and submission; for the sole study, or at least the chief aim of Ferdinand, was to make himself necessary and agreeable to those on whom his dependance was placed: his talent was in this particular suited to his inclination; he seemed to have inherited it from his mother's womb; and, without all doubt, would have raised upon it a most admirable superstructure of fortune and applause, had not it been inseparably yoked with a most insidious principle of self-love, that grew up with him from the cradle, and left no room in his heart for the least particle of social virtue. This last, however, he knew so well how to counterfeit, by means of a large share of ductility and dissimulation, that, surely, he was calculated by Nature to dupe even the most cautious, and gratify his appetites by levying contributions on all mankind.

So little are the common instructors of youth qualified to judge the capacities of those who are under their tutelage and care, that Fathom, by dint of his insinuating arts, made shift to pass upon the schoolmaster as a lad of quick parts,

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in despite of a natural inaptitude to retain his lessons, which all his industry could never overcome. In order to remedy, or rather to cloak this defect in his understanding, he had always recourse to the friendship of the young count, who freely permitted him to transcribe his exercises; until a small accident happened, which had well nigh put a stop to these instances of his generosity. The adventure, inconsiderable as it is, we shall record, as the first overt-act of Ferdinand's true character, as well as an illustration of the opinion we have advanced, touching the blind and injudicious decisions of a right pedagogue.

Among other tasks imposed by the pedant upon the form to which our two companions belonged, they were one evening ordered to translate a chapter of *Cæsar's commentaries*. Accordingly, the young count went to work, and performed the undertaking with great elegance and dispatch: Fathom having spent the night in more effeminate amusements, was next morning so much hurried for want of time, that in his transcription he neglected to insert a few variations from the text; these being the terms on which he was allowed to use it: so that it was verbatim a copy of the original. As those exercises were always delivered in a heap, subscribed with the several names of the boys to whom they belonged, the schoolmaster chanced to peruse the version of Ferdinand, before he looked into any of the rest, and could not help bestowing upon it particular marks of approbation: the next that fell under his examination was that of the young count, when he immediately perceived the sameness, and far from imputing it to the true cause, upbraided him with having copied the exercise of our adventurer, and insisted upon chastising him upon the spot for his want of application.

Had not the young gentleman thought his honour was concerned, he would have submitted to the punishment without murmuring; but he inherited from his parents the pride of two fierce nations, and being overwhelmed with reproaches for that which he imagined ought to have redounded to his glory, he could not brook the indignity, and boldly affirmed that he himself was the original, to whom Ferdinand was beholden for his performance. The

schoolmaster, nettled to find himself mistaken in his judgment, resolved that the count should have no cause to exult in the discovery he had made, and like a true flogger, actually whipped him for having allowed Fathom to copy his exercise. Nay, in the hope of vindicating his own penetration, he took an opportunity of questioning Ferdinand in private, concerning the circumstances of the translation; and our hero perceiving his drift, gave him such artful and ambiguous answers, as persuaded him that the young count had acted the part of a plagiarist, and that the other had been restrained from doing himself justice, by the consideration of his own dependance.

This profound director did not fail, in honour of his own discernment, to whisper about the misrepresentation, as an instance of the young count's insolence, and Fathom's humility and good sense. The story was circulated among the servants, especially the maids belonging to the family, whose favour our hero had acquired by his engaging behaviour; and at length it reached the ears of his patron, who, incensed at his son's presumption and inhospitality, called him to a severe account, when the young gentleman absolutely denied the truth of the allegation, and appealed to the evidence of Fathom himself. Our adventurer was accordingly summoned by the father, and encouraged to declare the truth, with an assurance of his constant protection; upon which Ferdinand very wisely fell upon his knees, and while the tears gushed from his eyes, acquitted the young count of the imputation, and expressed his apprehension, that the report had been spread by some of his enemies, who wanted to prejudice him in the opinion of his patron.

The old gentleman was not satisfied of his son's integrity, by this declaration: being naturally of a generous disposition, highly prepossessed in favour of the poor orphan, and chagrined at the unpromising appearance of his heir, he suspected that Fathom was over-awed by the fear of giving offence; and that, notwithstanding what he had said, the case really stood as it had been represented. In this persuasion, he earnestly exhorted his son to resist and combat with any impulse he might feel within himself, tending to selfishness, fraud, or imposition; to encourage every

ry sentiment of candour and benevolence, and to behave with moderation and affability to all his fellow-creatures. He laid upon him strong injunctions, not without a mixture of threats, to consider Fathom as the object of his peculiar regard; to respect him as the son of the count's preserver, as a Briton, a stranger, and above all, an helpless orphan, to whom the rights of hospitality were doubly due.

Such admonitions were not lost upon the youth; who, under the rough husk of his personal exhibition, possessed a large share of generous sensibility: without any formal professions to his father, he resolved to govern himself according to his remonstrances; and far from conceiving the least spark of animosity against Fathom, he looked upon the poor boy as the innocent cause of his disgrace, and redoubled his kindness towards him, that his honour might never again be called in question, upon the same subject. Nothing is more liable to misconstruction than an act of uncommon generosity; one half of the world mistake the motive, from want of ideas to conceive an instance of beneficence, that soars so high above the level of their own sentiments; and the rest suspect it of something sinister or selfish, from the suggestions of their own sordid and vicious inclinations. The young count subjected himself to such misinterpretation, among those who observed the increased warmth of civility and complaisance in his behaviour to Ferdinand: they ascribed it to his desire of still profiting by our adventurer's superior talents, by which alone they supposed him enabled to maintain any degree of reputation at school; or to the fear of being convicted by him of some misdemeanour of which he knew himself guilty. These suspicions were not effaced by the conduct of Ferdinand; who, when examined on the subject, managed his answers in such a manner, as confirmed their conjectures, while he pretended to refute them, and at the same time acquired to himself credit for his extraordinary discretion and self-denial.

If he exhibited such a proof of sagacity in the twelfth year of his age, what might not be expected from his fineness, in the maturity of his faculties and experience? Thus secured in the good graces of the whole family, he saw

the days of his puerility glide along in the most agreeable elapse of caresses and amusement. He never fairly plunged into the stream of school education; but, by floating on the surface, imbibed a small tincture of those different sciences which his master pretended to teach; in short, he resembled those vagrant swallows that skim along the level of some pool or river, without venturing to wet one feather in their wings, except in the accidental pursuit of an inconsiderable fly. Yet though his capacity or inclination was unsuited for studies of this kind, he did not fail to manifest a perfect genius in the acquisition of other more profitable arts. Over and above the accomplishments of address, for which he hath been already celebrated, he excelled all his fellows in his dexterity at fives and billiards; was altogether unrivalled in his skill at drafts and backgammon; began, even at these years, to understand the moves and schemes of chess; and made himself a mere adept in the mystery of cards, which he learned in the course of his assiduities and attention to the females of the house.

CHAP. VI.

HE MEDITATES SCHEMES OF IMPORTANCE.

IT was in these parties that he attracted the notice and friendship of his patron's daughter; a girl by two years older than himself, who was not insensible to his qualifications, and looked upon him with the most favourable eyes of prepossession. Whether or not he, at this period of his life, began to project plans for availing himself of her susceptibility, is uncertain; but without all doubt, he cultivated her esteem with as obsequious and submissive attention, as if he had already formed the design which in his advanced age he attempted to put in execution.

Divers circumstances conspired to promote him in the favour of this young lady; the greenness of his years secured him from any suspicion of fallacious aim; so that he was indulged in frequent opportunities of conversing with his young mistress, whose parents encouraged this communication, by which they hoped she would improve in speaking

ing the language of her father. Such connexions naturally produce intimacy and friendship. Fathom's person was agreeable, his talents calculated for the meridian of those parties, and his manners so engaging, that there would have been no just subject for wonder, had he made an impression upon the tender unexperienced heart of Mademoiselle De Melvil, whose beauty was not so attractive as to extinguish his hope, in raising up a number of formidable rivals; though her expectations of fortune were such as commonly lend additional lustre to personal merit.

All these considerations were so many steps towards the success of Ferdinand's pretensions; and though he cannot be supposed to have perceived them at first, he in the sequel seemed perfectly well apprized of his advantages, and used them to the full extent of his faculties. Observing that she delighted in musick, he betook himself to the study of that art; and by dint of application, and a tolerable ear, learned of himself to accompany her with a German flute, while she sung and played upon the harpsichord. The count seeing his inclination, and the progress he had made, resolved that his capacity should not be lost for want of cultivation; and accordingly provided him with a master, by whom he was instructed in the principles of the art, and soon became a proficient in playing upon the violin.

In the practice of these improvements and avocations, and in attendance upon his young master, whom he took care never to disoblige or neglect, he attained to the age of sixteen, without feeling the least abatement in the friendship and generosity of those upon whom he depended; but, on the contrary, receiving every day fresh marks of their bounty and regard. He had before this time, been smitten with the ambition of making a conquest of the young lady's heart; and foresaw manifold advantages to himself in becoming son-in-law to Count Melvil, who, he never doubted, would soon be reconciled to the match, if once it could be effectuated without his knowledge. Although he thought he had great reason to believe that Mademoiselle looked upon him with an eye of peculiar favour, his disposition was happily tempered with an ingredient of caution, that hindered him from acting with precipita-

tion; and he had discerned in the young lady's deportment certain indications of loftiness and pride, which kept him in the utmost vigilance of circumspection; for he knew that by a premature declaration he should run the risk of forfeiting all the advantages he had gained, and blasting those expectations that now blossomed so gaily in his heart.

Restricted by these reflections, he acted at a wary distance, and determined to proceed by the method of sap; and summoning all his artifice and attractions to his aid, employed them under the insidious cover of profound respect, in order to undermine those bulwarks of haughtiness or discretion, which otherwise might have rendered his approaches to her impracticable. With a view to enhance the value of his company, and found her sentiments at the same time, he became more reserved than usual, and seldom engaged in her parties of music and cards; yet, in the midst of his reserve, he never failed in those demonstrations of reverence and regard which he knew perfectly well how to express; but devised such excuses for his absence, as she could not help admitting. In consequence of this affected shyness, she more than once gently chid him for his neglect and indifference; observing, with an ironical air, that he was now too much of a man to be entertained with such effeminate diversions. But her reproofs were pronounced with too much ease and good humour to be agreeable to our hero, who desired to see her ruffled and chagrined at his absence, and to hear himself rebuked with an angry affectation of disdain. This effort, therefore, he reinforced with the most captivating carriage he could assume, in those hours which he now so sparingly bestowed upon his mistress; he regaled her with all the entertaining stories he could learn or invent, particularly such as he thought would justify and recommend the levelling power of love, that knows no distinctions of fortune. He sung nothing but tender airs and passionate complaints, composed by desponding or despairing swains; and to render his performances of this kind the more pathetick, interlarded them with some seasonable sighs, while the tears which he had ever at command, stood collected in either eye.

It was impossible for her to overlook such studied emotions; she, in a jocose manner,

manner, taxed him with having lost his heart, rallied the excess of his passion, and in a merry strain undertook to be an advocate for his love. Her behaviour was still wide of his wish and expectation: he thought she would, in consequence of her discovery, have betrayed some interested symptom; that her face would have undergone some favourable suffusion; that her tongue would have faltered, her breast heaved, and her whole deportment betokened internal agitation and disorder; in which case, he meant to profit by the happy impression, and declare himself before she could possibly recollect the dictates of her pride. Baffled however in his endeavours, by the serenity of the young lady, which he still deemed equivocal, he had recourse to another experiment, by which he believed he should make a discovery of her sentiments, beyond all possibility of doubt. One day, while he accompanied Mademoiselle in her exercises of musick, he pretended all of a sudden to be taken ill, and counterfeited a swoon in her apartment. Surprized at this accident, she screamed aloud, but far from running to his assistance, with the transports and distraction of a lover, she ordered her maid, who was present, to support his head, and went in person to call for more help: he was accordingly removed to his own chamber, where, willing to be still more certified of her inclinations, he prolonged the farce, and lay groaning under the pretence of a severe fever.

The whole family was alarmed upon this occasion; for, as we have already observed, he was an universal favourite. He was immediately visited by the old count and his lady, who expressed the utmost concern at his distemper, ordered him to be carefully attended, and sent for a physician without loss of time. The young gentleman would scarce stir from his bedside, where he ministered unto him with all the demonstrations of brotherly affection; and Miss exhorted him to keep up his spirits, with many expressions of unreserved sympathy and regard: nevertheless, he saw nothing in her behaviour, but what might be naturally expected from common friendship, and a compassionate disposition, and was very much mortified at his disappointment.

Whether the miscarriage actually af-

ected his constitution, or the doctor happened to be mistaken in his diagnostics, we shall not pretend to determine; but the patient was certainly treated *secundum artem*, and all his complaints in a little time realized; for the physician, like a true graduate, had an eye to the apothecary in his prescriptions; and such was the concern and scrupulous care with which our hero was attended, that the orders of the faculty were performed with the utmost punctuality. He was blooded, vomited, purged, and blistered in the usual forms, (for the physicians of Hungary are generally as well skilled in the arts of their occupation, as any other leeches under the sun) and swallowed a whole dispensary of boluses, draughts, and apozems, by which means he became fairly delirious in three days, and so untractable, that he could be no longer managed according to rule; otherwise, in all likelihood, the world would never have enjoyed the benefit of these adventures. In short, his constitution, though unable to cope with two such formidable antagonists, as the doctor, and the disease he had conjured up, was no sooner rid of the one, than it easily got the better of the other; and though Ferdinand, after all, found his grand aim unaccomplished, his malady was productive of a consequence, which, though he had not foreseen it, he did not fail to convert to his own use and advantage.

CHAP. VII.

ENGAGES IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
A FEMALE ASSOCIATE, IN OR-
DER TO PUT HIS TALENTS IN
ACTION.

WHILE he displayed his qualifications in order to intrap the heart of his young mistress, he had unwittingly enslaved the affections of her maid. This attendant was also a favourite of the young lady, and though her senior by two or three good years at least, unquestionably her superior in point of personal beauty; she moreover possessed a good stock of cunning and discernment, and was furnished by nature with a very amorous complexion. These circumstances being premised, the reader will not be surprized to find her

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smitten

smitten by those uncommon qualifications which we have celebrated in young Fathom. She had, in good sooth, long sighed in secret, under the powerful influence of his charms, and practised upon him all those little arts, by which a woman strives to attract the admiration and ensnare the heart of a man she loves: but all his faculties were employed upon the plan which he had already projected; that was the goal of his whole attention, to which all his measures tended; and whether or not he perceived the impression he had made upon Teresa, he never gave her the least reason to believe he was conscious of his victory, until he found himself baffled in his design upon the heart of her mistress. She therefore persevered in her distant attempts to allure him, with the usual coquetries of dress and address, and in the sweet hope of profiting by his susceptibility, made shift to suppress her feelings, and keep her passion within bounds; until his supposed danger alarmed her fears, and raised such a tumult within her breast, that she could no longer conceal her love, but gave a loose to her sorrow in the most immoderate expressions of anguish and affliction, and while his delirium lasted, behaved with all the agitation of a despairing shepherdess.

Ferdinand was, or pretended to be, the last person in the family, who understood the situation of her thoughts; when he perceived her passion, he entered into deliberation with himself, and tasked his reflexion and foresight, in order to discover how best he might convert this conquest to his own advantage. Here, then, that we may neglect no opportunity of doing justice to our hero, it will be proper to observe, that howsoever unapt his understanding might be to receive and retain the usual culture of the schools, he was naturally a genius self taught, in point of sagacity and invention. He dived into the characters of mankind, with a penetration peculiar to himself, and had he been admitted as a pupil in any political academy, would have certainly become one of the ablest statesmen in Europe.

Having revolved all the probable consequences of such a connexion, he determined to prosecute an amour with the lady whose affection he had subdued; because he hoped to interest her as an auxiliary in his grand scheme upon Ma-

demoiselle, which he did not as yet think proper to lay aside; for he was not more ambitious in the plan, than indefatigable in the prosecution of it. He knew it would be impossible to execute his aims upon the count's daughter, under the eye of Teresa, whose natural discernment would be whetted with jealousy, and who would watch his conduct, and thwart his progress with all the vigilance and spite of a flighted maiden. On the other hand, he did not doubt of being able to bring her over to his interest, by the influence he had already gained, or might afterwards acquire over her passions; in which case, she would effectually espouse his cause, and employ her good offices with her mistress, in his behalf: besides, he was induced by another motive, which, though secondary, did not fail in this case to have an effect upon his determination. He looked upon Teresa with the eyes of appetite, which he longed to gratify: for he was not at all dead to the instigations of the flesh, though he had philosophy enough to resist them, when he thought they interfered with his interest. Here the case was quite different: his desire happened to be upon the side of his advantage; and therefore, resolving to indulge it, he no sooner found himself in a condition to manage such an adventure, than he began to make gradual advances in point of warmth and particular complacency to the love-sick maid.

He first of all thanked her, in the most grateful terms, for the concern she had manifested at his distemper, and the kind services he had received from her, during the course of it; he treated her upon all occasions with unusual affability and regard, assiduously courted her acquaintance and conversation, and contracted an intimacy that, in a little time, produced a declaration of love. Although her heart was too much intendered to hold out against all the forms of assault, far from yielding at discretion, she stood upon honourable terms, with great obstinacy of punctilio, and while she owned he was master of her inclinations, gave him to understand, with a peremptory and resolute air, that he should never make a conquest of her virtue; observing, that if the passion he professed was genuine, he would not scruple to give such a proof of it, as would

would at once convince her of his sincerity; and that he could have no just cause to refuse her that satisfaction, she being his equal in point of birth and situation: for, if he was the companion and favourite of the young count, she was the friend and confidante of Mademoiselle.

He acknowledged the strength of her argument, and that her condescension was greater than his deserts: but objected against the proposal, as infinitely prejudicial to the fortunes of them both. He represented the state of dependance in which they mutually stood; their utter incapacity to support one another, under the consequences of a precipitate match, clandestinely made, without the consent and concurrence of their patrons: he displayed, with great eloquence, all those gay expectations they had reason to entertain, from that eminent degree of favour which they had already secured in the family; and set forth, in the most alluring colours, those enchanting scenes of pleasures they might enjoy in each other, without that disagreeable consciousness of a nuptial chain, provided she would be his associate in the execution of a plan which he had projected for their reciprocal convenience.

Having thus inflamed her love of pleasure and curiosity, he, with great caution, hinted his design upon the young lady's fortune; and perceiving her listening with the most greedy attention, and perfectly ripe for the conspiracy, he disclosed his intention at full length; assuring her, with the most solemn protestations of love and attachment, that could he once make himself legal possessor of an estate which Mademoiselle inherited by the will of a deceased aunt, his dear Teresa should reap the happy fruits of his affluence, and wholly engross his time and attention.

Such a base declaration our hero would not have ventured to make, had he not implicitly believed the damsel was as great a latitudinarian as himself in point of morals and principle; and been well assured, that though he should be mistaken in her way of thinking, so far as to be threatened with a detection of his purpose, he would always have it in his power to refute her accusation as mere calumny, by the character he had hitherto maintained, and the circumspection of his future conduct.

He seldom or never erred in his observations on the human heart. Teresa,

instead of disapproving, relished the plan in general with demonstrations of singular satisfaction; she at once conceived all the advantageous consequences of such a scheme, and perceived in it only one flaw, which, however, she did not think incurable. This defect was no other than a sufficient bond of union, by which they might be effectually tied down to their mutual interest. She foresaw, that in case Ferdinand should obtain possession of the prize, he might, with great ease, deny their contract, and disavow her claim of participation. She therefore demanded security, and proposed as a preliminary of the agreement, that he should privately take her to wife, with a view to dispel all her apprehensions of his inconstancy or deceit, as such a previous engagement would be a check upon his behaviour, and keep him strictly to the letter of their contract.

He could not help subscribing to the righteousness of this proposal, which, nevertheless, he would have willingly waved, on the supposition that they could not possibly be joined in the bands of wedlock with such secrecy as the nature of the case absolutely required. This would have been a difficulty soon removed, had the scene of the transaction been laid in the metropolis of England, where passengers are plied in the streets by clergymen, who prostitute their characters and consciences for hire, in defiance of all decency and law; but in the kingdom of Hungary, ecclesiasticks are more scrupulous in the exercise of their function, and the objection was, or supposed to be, altogether insurmountable; so that they were fain to have recourse to an expedient, with which, after some hesitation, our sine-adventurer was satisfied. They joined hands in the sight of Heaven, which they called to witness, and to judge the sincerity of their vows, and engaged in a voluntary oath to confirm their union by the sanction of the church, whenever a convenient opportunity for so doing should occur.

The scruples of Teresa being thus removed, she admitted Ferdinand to the privileges of a husband, which he enjoyed in stolen interviews; and readily undertook to exert her whole power in promoting his suit with her young mistress, because she now considered his interest as inseparably connected with her own. Surely nothing could be more absurd or preposterous than the articles

of this covenant, which she insisted upon with such inflexibility. How could she suppose that her pretended lover would be restrained by an oath, when the very occasion of incurring it was an intention to act in violation of all laws human and divine; and yet such ridiculous conjuration is commonly the cement of every conspiracy, how dark, how treacherous, how impious soever it may be! A certain sign that there are some remains of religion left in the human mind, even after every moral sentiment hath abandoned it; and that the most execrable ruffian finds means to quiet the suggestions of his conscience, by some reverent hope of Heaven's forgiveness.

CHAP. VIII.

THEIR FIRST ATTEMPT; WITH
A DIGRESSION WHICH SOME
READERS MAY THINK IMPER-
TINENT.

BE this as it will, our lovers, though real voluptuaries, amidst the first transports of their enjoyment, did not neglect the great political aim of their conjunction. Teresa's bed-chamber, to which our hero constantly repaired at midnight, was the scene of their deliberations, and there it was determined, that the damsel, in order to avoid suspicion, should feign herself irritated at the indifference of Ferdinand, her passion for whom was by this time no secret in the family; and that with a view to countenance this affectation, he should upon all occasions treat her with an air of loftiness and disdain.

So screened from all imputation of fraud, she was furnished by him with artful instructions how to sound the inclinations of her young mistress; how to recommend his person and qualifications by the sure methods of contradiction, comparison, revilings, and reproach; how to watch the paroxysms of her disposition, inflame her passions, and improve, for his advantage, those moments of frailty from which no woman is exempted. In short, this consummate politician taught his agent to poison the young lady's mind with insidious conversation, tending to inspire her with the love of guilty pleasure, to debauch her sentiments, and confound

her ideas of dignity and virtue. After all, the task is not difficult to lead the unpractised heart astray, by dint of those opportunities her seducer possessed. The seeds of insinuation seasonably sown upon the warm, luxuriant soil of youth, could hardly fail of shooting up into such intemperate desires as he wanted to produce; especially when cultured and cherished in her unguarded hours by that stimulating discourse which familiarity admits, and the looser passions ingrafted in every breast are apt to relish and excuse.

Fathom had previously reconnoitred the ground, and discovered some marks of inflammability in Mademoiselle's constitution; her beauty was not such as to engage her in those gaieties of amusement, which could flatter her vanity, and dissipate her ideas; and she was of an age when the little loves and young desires take possession of the fancy; he therefore concluded, that she had the more leisure to indulge those enticing images of pleasure that youth never fails to create, particularly in those who, like her, were addicted to solitude and study.

Teresa, full fraught with the wily injunctions of her confederate, took the field, and opened the campaign with such remarkable sourness in her aspect, when Ferdinand appeared, that her young lady could not help taking notice of her affected chagrin, and asked the reason of such apparent alteration in her way of thinking. Prepared for this question, the other replied in a manner calculated for giving Mademoiselle to understand, that whatever impressions Ferdinand might have formerly made on her heart, they were now altogether effaced by the pride and insolence with which he had received her advances; and that her breast now glowed with all the revenge of a slighted lover.

To evince the sincerity of this declaration, she bitterly inveighed against him, and even affected to depreciate those talents in which she knew his chief merit to consist; hoping by these means to interest Mademoiselle's candour in his defence. So far the train succeeded: that young lady's love for truth was offended at the calumnies that were vented against Ferdinand in his absence. She chid her woman for the rancour of her remarks, and undertook to refute the articles of his dispraise: Teresa sup-
ported

ported her own assertions with great obstinacy, and a dispute ensued, in which her mistress was heated into some extravagant commendations of our adventurer.

His supposed enemy did not fail to make a report of her success, and to magnify every advantage they had gained; believing in good earnest, that her lady's warmth was the effect of a real passion for the fortunate Mr. Fathom: but he himself viewed the adventure in a different light; and rightly imputed the violence of Mademoiselle's behaviour to the contradiction she had sustained from her maid; or to the fire of her natural generosity, glowing in behalf of innocence traduced. Nevertheless, he was perfectly well pleased with the nature of the contest; because, in the course of such debates, he foresaw that he should become habitually her hero, and that in time she would actually believe those exaggerations of his merit, which she herself had feigned for the honour of her own arguments.

This preface, founded upon that principle of self-respect without which no individual exists, may certainly be justified by manifold occurrences in life: we ourselves have known a very pregnant example; which we shall relate for the emolument of the reader.—A certain needy author having found means to present a manuscript to one of those sons of fortune, who are dignified with the appellation of patrons, instead of reaping that applause and advantage with which he had regaled his fancy, had the mortification to find his performance treated with infinite irreverence and contempt; and in high dudgeon and disappointment appealed to the judgment of another critick, who he knew had no veneration for the first.

This common consolation, to which all baffled authors have recourse, was productive of very happy consequences to our bard: for though the opinions of both judges, concerning the piece, were altogether the same, the latter, either out of compassion to the appellant, or desire of rendering his rival ridiculous in the eye of taste, undertook to repair the misfortune; and in this manner executed the plan, in a meeting of literati, to which both these wits belonged: he who had espoused the poet's cause, having previously desired another member to bring his composition on the carpet,

no sooner heard it mentioned, than he began to censure it with flagrant marks of scorn; and with an ironical air looking at it's first condemner, observed, that he must be furiously infected with the rage of patronizing, who could take such a deplorable performance into his protection. The sarcasm took effect.

The person against whom it was levelled, taking umbrage at his presumption, assumed an aspect of disdain, and replied with great animosity, that nothing was more easily supported than the character of a Zoilus; because no production was altogether free from blemishes, and any man might pronounce against any piece by the lump, without interesting his own discernment: but to perceive the beauties of a work, it was requisite to have learning, judgment, and taste; and therefore he did not wonder that the gentleman had overlooked a great many in the composition which he so contemptuously decried. A rejoinder succeeded this reply, and produced a long train of altercation, in which the gentleman who had formerly treated the book with such disrespect, now professed himself it's passionate admirer, and held forth in praise of it with great warmth and elocution.

Not contented with having exhibited this instance of regard, he next morning sent a message to the owner, importing that he had but superficially glanced over the manuscript, and desiring the favour of perusing it a second time. Being indulged in this request, he recommended it in terms of rapture to all his friends and dependants; and by dint of unwearied sollicitation, procured a very ample subscription for the author.

But, to resume the thread of our story.—Teresa's practices were not confined to simple defamation: her reproaches were contrived so as to imply some intelligence in favour of the person she reviled. In exemplifying his perverseness and arrogance, she repeated his witty repartee; on pretence of blaming his ferocity, she recounted proofs of his spirit and prowess; and in explaining the source of his vanity, gave her mistress to understand, that a certain young lady of fashion was said to be enamoured of his person. Nor did this well-instructed undertrapper omit those other parts of her cue, which the principal judged necessary for the furtherance of his scheme. Her conversation be-

came

came less guarded, and took a freer turn than usual. She seized all opportunities of introducing little amorous stories, the greatest part of which were invented for the purposes of warming her passions, and lowering the price of chastity in her esteem; for she represented all the young lady's contemporaries in point of age and situation, as so many sensualists, who without scruple indulged themselves in the stolen pleasures of youth.

Meanwhile, Ferdinand seconded these endeavours with his whole industry and address: he redoubled, if possible, his deference and respect, whetting his assiduity to the keenest edge of attention; and, in short, regulated his dress, conversation, and deportment, according to the fancy, turn, and prevailing humour, of his young mistress. He moreover attempted to profit by her curiosity, which he knew to be truly feminine; and having culled from the library of his patron certain dangerous books, calculated to debauch the minds of young people, left them occasionally upon the table in his apartment, after having directed Teresa to pick them up, as if by accident, in his absence, and carry them off for the entertainment of Mademoiselle; nay, this crafty projector found means to furnish his associate with some mischievous preparations, which were mingled in her chocolate, tea, or coffee, as provocations to warm her constitution: yet all these machinations, ingenious as they were, failed, not only in fulfilling their aim, but even in shaking the foundations of her virtue or pride, which stood their assaults, unmoved, like a strong tower built upon a rock, impregnable to all the tempestuous blasts of heaven.

Not but that the conspirators were more than once mistaken in the effects of their artifices, and disposed to applaud themselves on the progress they had made. When at any time she expressed a desire to examine those performances which were laid before her as snares to entrap her chastity, they attributed that, which was no other than curiosity, to a looseness of sentiment; and when she discovered no aversion to hear those anecdotes concerning the frailty of her neighbours, they imputed to abatement of chastity, that satisfaction which was the result of self-congratulation on her own superior virtue.

So far did the treacherous accomplice of Fathom presume upon these misconstructions, that she at length divested her tongue of all restraint, and behaved in such a manner, that the young lady, confounded and incensed at her indecency and impudence, rebuked her with great severity, and commanded her to reform her discourse, on pain of being dismissed with disgrace from her service.

CHAP. IX.

THE CONFEDERATES CHANGE THEIR BATTERY; AND ATCHIEVE A REMARKABLE ADVENTURE.

THUNDERSTRUCK at this disappointment, the confederates held a council, in order to deliberate upon the next measures that should be taken; and Ferdinand, for the present, despairing of accomplishing his grand aim, resolved to profit in another manner, by the convenience of his situation. He represented to his helpmate, that it would be prudent for them to make hay while the sun shone, as their connection might be sooner or later discovered, and an end put to all those opportunities which they now so happily enjoyed. All principles of morality had been already excluded from their former plan; consequently, he found it an easy task to interest Teresa in any other scheme tending to their mutual advantage, howsoever wicked and perfidious it might be. He therefore persuaded her to be his auxiliary in defrauding Mademoiselle at play, and gave her suitable directions for that purpose; and even tutored her how to abuse the trust reposed in her, by embezzling the young lady's effects, without incurring the suspicion of dishonesty.

On the supposition that every servant in the house was not able to resist such temptation, the purse of her mistress (to which the maid had always access) was dropped in a passage, which the domesticks had occasion to frequent, and Fathom posted himself in a convenient place, in order to observe the effect of his stratagem. Here he was not disappointed in his conjecture. The first person who chanced to pass that way, was one of the chambermaids, with whom Teresa had lived for some time in a state

a state of inveterate enmity, because the wench had failed in that homage and respect which was paid to her by the rest of the servants.

Ferdinand had in his heart espoused the quarrel of his associate, and longed for an occasion to deliver her from the malicious observance of such an antagonist; when he, therefore, saw her approach, his heart throbbed with joyful expectations; but, when she snatched up the purse, and thrust it in her bosom, with all the eagerness and confusion of one determined to appropriate the windfall to her own use, his transports were altogether unspeakable. He traced her to her own apartment, whither she immediately retreated with great trepidation, and then communicated the discovery to Teresa, together with instructions how to behave in the sequel.

In conformity with these lessons, she took the first opportunity of going to Mademoiselle, and demanding money for some necessary expence, that the loss might be known, before the finder could have leisure to make any fresh conveyance of the prize; and in the mean time, Ferdinand kept a strict eye upon the motions of the chambermaid. The young lady having rummaged her pockets in vain, expressed some surprize at the loss of her purse, upon which her attendant gave indications of extreme amazement and concern; she said, it could not possibly be lost, intreated her to search her escutore, while she herself ran about the room, prying into every corner, with all the symptoms of fear and distraction. Having made this unsuccessful inquiry, she pretended to shed a flood of tears, bewailing her own fate, in being near the person of any lady who met with such a misfortune, by which, she observed, her character might be called in question: she produced her own keys, and begged upon her knees, that her chamber and boxes might be searched without delay.

In a word, she demeaned herself so artfully, upon this occasion, that her mistress, who never entertained the least doubt of her integrity, now looked upon her as a miracle of fidelity and attachment, and was at infinite pains to console her for the accident which had happened; protesting that, for her own part, the loss of the money should never affect her with a moment's uneasiness, if she could

retrieve a certain medal which she had long kept in her purse, as a remembrance of her deceased aunt, from whom she received it in a present.

Fathom entered accidentally in the midst of this well-acted scene, and perceiving the agitation of the maid, and the concern of the mistress, desired, in a respectful manner, to know the cause of their disorder. Before the young lady had time to make him acquainted with the circumstances of the case, his accomplice exclaimed in an affected passion, 'Mr. Fathom, my lady has lost her purse; and as no persons in the family are so much about her, as you and I, you must give me leave in my own justification, to insist upon Mademoiselle's ordering the apartments of us both to be searched without loss of time: here are my pockets and my keys, and you cannot scruple to give her the same satisfaction; for innocence has nothing to fear.'

Miss Melville reprimanded her sharply for her unmannerly zeal; and Ferdinand eying her with a look of disdain, 'Madam,' said he, 'I approve of your proposal; but before I undergo such mortification, I would advise Mademoiselle to subject the two chambermaids to such inquiry: as they also have access to the apartments, and are, I apprehend, as likely as you or I, to behave in such a scandalous manner.'

The young lady declared that she was too well satisfied of Teresa's honesty and Ferdinand's honour, to harbour the least suspicion of either, and that she would sooner die than disgrace them so far as to comply with the proposal the former had made; but as she saw no reason for exempting the inferior servants from that examination which Fathom advised, she would forthwith put it into execution. The chambermaids being accordingly summoned, she calmly asked if either of them had accidentally found the purse she had dropped, and both replying in the negative, she assumed an air of severity and determination, and demanding their keys, threatened to examine their trunks on the instant.

The guilty Abigail, who, though an Hungarian, was not inferior, in point of effrontery, to any one of the sisterhood in England, no sooner heard this menace,

nance, than she affected an air of affronted innocence, thanked God she had lived in many reputable families, and been trusted with untold gold, but was never before suspected of theft; that the other maid might do as she should think proper, and be mean-spirited enough to let her things be tumbled topsy-turvy and exposed; but, for her own part, if she should be used in that inhuman and disgraceful manner, she would not stay another hour in the house: and, in conclusion, said, that Mademoiselle had more reason to look sharp after those who enjoyed the greatest share of her favour, than believe their malicious insinuations against innocent people whom they were well known to hate and defame!

This declaration implying an hint to the prejudice of Teresa, far from diverting Miss Melville from her purpose, served only to enhance the character of the accused in her opinion, and to confirm her suspicion of the accuser; of whom she again demanded her keys, protesting, that should she prove refractory, the count himself should take cognizance of the affair, whereas if she would deal ingenuously, she should have no cause to repent of her confession. So saying, she desired our adventurer to take the trouble of calling up some of the men servants; upon which the conscious criminal began to tremble, and falling upon her knees, acknowledged her guilt, and implored the forgiveness of her young mistress.

Teresa seizing this occasion to signalize her generosity, joined in the request, and the offender was pardoned, after having restored the purse, and promised in the sight of heaven, that the devil should never again entice her to the commission of such a crime. This adventure fully answered all the purposes of our politician; it established the opinion of his fellow-labourer's virtue, beyond the power of accident or information to shake, and set up a false beacon to mislead the sentiments of Mademoiselle, in case she should for the future meet with the like misfortune.

C H A P. X.

THEY PROCEED TO LEVY CONTRIBUTIONS WITH GREAT SUCCESS, UNTIL OUR HERO SETS OUT

WITH THE YOUNG COUNT FOR VIENNA, WHERE HE ENTERS INTO LEAGUE WITH ANOTHER ADVENTURER.

UNDER this secure cover, Teresa levied contributions upon her mistress with great success. Some trinket was missing every day; the young lady's patience began to fail, the faithful attendant was overwhelmed with consternation, and with the appearance of extreme chagrin, demanded her dismissal, affirming that these things were certainly effected by some person in the family, with a view of murdering her precious reputation. Miss Melville, not without difficulty, quieted her vexation with assurances of inviolable confidence and esteem, until a pair of diamond ear-rings vanished, when Teresa could no longer keep her affliction within bounds. Indeed, this was an event of more consequence than all the rest which had happened, for the jewels were valued at five hundred florins.

Mademoiselle was accordingly alarmed to such a degree, that she made her mother acquainted with her loss, and that good lady, who was an excellent economist, did not fail to give indications of extraordinary concern. She asked, if her daughter had reason to suspect any individual in the family, and if she was perfectly confident of her own woman's integrity: upon which Mademoiselle, with many encomiums on the fidelity and attachment of Teresa, recounted the adventure of the chambermaid, who immediately underwent a strict enquiry, and was even committed to prison, on the strength of her former misdemeanour. Our adventurer's mate insisted upon undergoing the same trial with the rest of the domesticks; and, as usual, comprehended Fathom in her insinuations; while he seconded the proposal, and privately counselled the old lady to introduce Teresa to the magistrate of the place. By these pre-concerted recriminations, they escaped all suspicion of collusion. After a fruitless enquiry, the prisoner was discharged from her confinement, and turned out of the service of the count, in whose private opinion the character of no person suffered so much as that of his own son, whom he suspected of having embezzled the jewels, for the use

use of a certain innamorata, who at that time was said to have captivated his affections.

The old gentleman felt, upon this occasion, all that internal anguish which a man of honour may be supposed to suffer on account of a son's degeneracy; and without divulging his sentiments, or even hinting his suspicions to the youth himself, determined to detach him at once from such dangerous connections, by sending him forthwith to Vienna, on pretence of finishing his exercises at the academy, and ushering him into acquaintance with the great world. Though he would not be thought by the young gentleman himself, to harbour the least doubt of his morals, he did not scruple to unbosom himself on that subject to Ferdinand, whose sagacity and virtue he held in great veneration. This indulgent passion, expressed himself in the most pathetic terms, on the untoward disposition of his son; he told Fathom that he should accompany Renaldo (that was the youth's name) not only as a companion, but as a preceptor and pattern; conjured him to assist his tutor in superintending his conduct, and to reinforce the governor's precepts, by his own example; to inculcate upon him the most delicate punctilios of honour; and decoy him into extravagance, rather than leave the least illiberal sentiment in his heart.

Our crafty adventurer, with demonstrations of the utmost sensibility, acknowledged the great goodness of the count in reposing such confidence in his integrity; which, as he observed, none but the worst of villains could abuse; and fervently wished that he might no longer exist, than he should continue to remember and resent the obligations he owed to his kind benefactor. While preparations were making for their departure, our hero held a council with his associate, whom he enriched with many sage instructions touching her future operations; he at the same time disburdened her of all or the greatest part of the spoils she had won; and after having received divers marks of bounty from the count and his lady, together with a purse from his young mistress, he set out for Vienna in the eighteenth year of his age, with Renaldo and his governor, who were provided with letters of recommendation

to some of the count's friends belonging to the Imperial court.

Such a favourable introduction could not fail of being advantageous to a youth of Ferdinand's specious accomplishments; for he was considered as the young count's companion, admitted into his parties, and included in all the entertainments to which Renaldo was invited. He soon distinguished himself by his activity and address, in the course of those exercises that were taught at the academy of which he was pupil; his manners were so engaging as to attract the acquaintance of his fellow-students, and his conversation being sprightly and inoffensive, grew into very great request; in a word, he and the young count formed a remarkable contrast, which in the eye of the world redounded to his advantage.

They were certainly, in all respects, the reverse of each other. Renaldo, under a total defect of exterior cultivation, possessed a most excellent understanding, with every virtue that dignifies the human heart; while the other, beneath a most agreeable outside, with an inaptitude and aversion to letters, concealed an amazing fund of villainy and ingratitude. Hitherto, his observation had been confined to a narrow sphere, and his reflections, though surprisingly just and acute, had not attained to that maturity which age and experience give: but now, his perceptions began to be more distinct, and extended to a thousand objects which had never before come under his cognizance.

He had formerly imagined, but was now fully persuaded, that the sons of men preyed upon one another, and such was the end and condition of their being. Among the principal figures of life, he observed few or no characters that did not bear a strong analogy to the savage tyrants of the wood. One resembled a tyger in fury and rapaciousness; a second prowled about like an hungry wolf, seeking whom he might devour; a third acted the part of a jackall, in beating the bush for game to his voracious employer; and a fourth imitated the wily fox, in practising a thousand crafty ambuscades for the destruction of the ignorant and unwary. This last was the department of life for which he found himself best qualified by nature and inclination, and he

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accordingly

accordingly resolved that his talent should not rust in his possession. He was already pretty well versed in all the sciences of play; but he had every day occasion to see these arts carried to such a surprising pitch of finesse and dexterity, as discouraged him from building his schemes on that foundation.

He therefore determined to fascinate the judgment, rather than the eyes of his fellow-creatures, by a continual exercise of that gift of deceiving, with which he knew himself endued to an unrivalled degree; and to acquire unbounded influence with those who might be subservient to his interest, by an assiduous application to their prevailing passions. Not that play was altogether left out in the projection of his economy: though he engaged himself very little in the executive part of gaming, he had not been long in Vienna, when he entered into league with a genius of that kind, whom he distinguished among the pupils of the academy; and who, indeed, had taken up his habitation in that place, with a view to pillage the provincials on their first arrival in town, before they could be armed with proper circumspection to preserve their money, or have time to dispose of it in any other shape.

Similar characters naturally attract each other, and people of our hero's principle are, of all others, the most apt to distinguish their own likeness wheresoever it occurs, because they always keep the faculty of discerning in full exertion. It was in consequence of this mutual alertness, that Ferdinand and the stranger, who was a native of Tyrol, perceived themselves reflected in the dispositions of each other, and immediately entered into an offensive and defensive alliance: our adventurer undertaking for the articles of intelligence, countenance, and counsel; and his associate charging himself with the risk of execution.

CHAP. XI.

FATHOM MAKES VARIOUS EFFORTS
IN THE WORLD OF GALLANTRY.

THUS connected, they began to hunt in couples; and Fathom, in order to profit by the alliance, with a

good grace, contrived a small scheme that succeeded to his wish. Renaldo being one night intoxicated in the course of a merry-making with his fellow-pupils, from which Fathom had purposely absented himself, was by the Tyroleze so artfully provoked to play, that he could not resist the temptation, but engaged at pass-dice with that fell adversary, who in less than an hour stripped him of a pretty round sum. Next day, when the young gentleman recovered the use of his reflection, he was sensibly chagrined at the folly and precipitation of his own conduct, an account of which he communicated in confidence to our hero, with demonstrations of infinite shame and concern.

Ferdinand having moralized upon the subject with great sagacity, and sharply inveighed against the Tyroleze, for the unfair advantage he had taken, retired to his closet and wrote the following billet, which was immediately sent to his ally.

‘THE obligations I owe, and the
‘ attachments I feel to the Count
‘ De Melville, will not suffer me to be
‘ an idle spectator of the wrongs of-
‘ fered to his son, in the dishonourable
‘ use, I understand, you made last night
‘ of his unguarded hours: I therefore
‘ insist upon your making immediate re-
‘ stitution of the booty which you sound-
‘ justly got; otherwise I expect you will
‘ meet me upon the ramparts, near the
‘ bastion De la Port-Neuve, to-morrow
‘ morning at day-break, in order to
‘ justify with your sword the finesse
‘ you have practised upon the friend of

‘ FERDINAND DE FATHOM.’

The gamester no sooner received this intimation, than, according to the plan which had been preconcerted betwixt the author and him, he went to the apartment of Renaldo, and presenting the sum of money which he had defrauded him of the preceding night, told him, with a stern countenance, that though it was a just acquisition, he scorned to avail himself of his good fortune against any person who entertained the smallest doubt of his honour.

The young count, surprized at this address, rejected his offer with disdain, and desired to know the meaning of such
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an unexpected declaration. Upon which, the other produced Ferdinand's billet, and threatened in very high terms, to meet the stripping according to his invitation, and chastise him severely for his presumption. The consequence of this explanation is obvious. Renaldo, imputing the officiousness of Fathom to the zeal of his friendship, interposed in the quarrel, which was amicably compromised, not a little to the honour of our adventurer, who thus obtained an opportunity of displaying his courage and integrity, without the least hazard to his person; while, at the same time, his confederate recommended himself to the esteem of the young count, by his spirited behaviour on this occasion; so that Renaldo being less shy of his company for the future, the Tyroleze had the fairer opportunities to prosecute his designs upon the young gentleman's purse.

It would be almost superfluous to say that these were not neglected. The son of Count Melville was not deficient in point of penetration: but his whole study was at that time engrossed by the care of his education; and he had sometimes recourse to play, as to an amusement by which he sought to unbend the severity of his attention. No wonder, then, that he fell a prey to an artful gamester, who had been regularly trained to the profession, and made it the sole study of his life; especially as the Hungarian was remarkable for a warmth of temper, which a knight of the post always knows how to manage for his own advantage.

In the course of these operations, Fathom was a very useful correspondent; he instructed the Tyroleze in the peculiarities of Renaldo's disposition, and made him acquainted with the proper seasons for profiting by his dexterity. Ferdinand, for example, who by the authority derived to him from the injunctions of the old count, sometimes took upon himself the office of an adviser, cunningly chose to counsel the son, at those conjunctures, when he knew him least able to bear such expostulation. Advice improperly administered, generally acts in diametrical opposition to the purpose for which it is supposed to be given: at least, this was the case with the young gentleman; who, inflamed by the reproof of such a tutor, used to obey the dictates of his

resentment, in an immediate repetition, of that conduct which our adventurer had taken the liberty to disapprove; and the gamester was always at hand, to minister unto his indignation. By these means he was disencumbered of divers considerable remittances, with which his father cheerfully supplied him, on the supposition that they were spent with taste and liberality, under the direction of our adventurer.

But Ferdinand's views were not confined to the narrow field of this alliance: he attempted divers enterprizes in the world of gallantry; conscious of his own personal qualifications, and never doubting that he could insinuate himself into the good graces of some married lady about court, or lay an opulent dowager under contribution. But he met with an obstacle in his endeavours of this kind, which all his art was unable to surmount. This was no other than the obscurity of his birth, and the want of a title, without which no person in that country lays claim to the privileges of a gentleman. Had he foreseen this inconvenience, he might have made shift to obviate the consequences, by obtaining permission to appear in the character of the count's kinsman: though, in all probability, such an expedient would not have been extremely agreeable to the old gentleman, who was very tenacious of the honour of his family. Nevertheless, his generosity might have been prevailed upon to indulge Fathom with such a pretext, in consideration of the youth's supposed attachment, and the obligations for which he deemed himself indebted to his deceased mother.

True it is, Ferdinand, upon his first arrival at Vienna, had been admitted into fashionable company, on the footing of Renaldo's companion, because nobody suspected the defect of his pedigree; and even after a report had been circulated to the prejudice of his extraction, by the industry of a lacquey who attended the young count, there were not wanting many young people of distinction, who still favoured him with their countenance and correspondence: but he was no longer invited to private families, in which only he could expect to profit by his address among the ladies, and had the mortification of finding himself frequently excepted from parties which were expressly calculated for the

entertainment of the young count. Luckily, his spirit was so pliant as to sustain these slights, without being much dejected: instead of repining at the loss of that respect which had been paid to him at first, he endeavoured with all his might to preserve the little that still remained, and resolved to translate into an humbler sphere that gallantry which he had no longer opportunities of displaying in the world of rank and fashion.

CHAP. XII.

HE EFFECTS A LODGMENT IN THE HOUSE OF A RICH JEWELLER.

IN consequence of this determination, he, to the uttermost, exerted his good-humour among the few friends of consequence his fortune had left, and even carried his complaisance so far, as to become the humble servant of their pleasures; while he attempted to extend his acquaintance in an inferior path of life, where he thought his talents would shine more conspicuous than at the assemblies of the great, and conduce more effectually to the interest of all his designs: Nor did he find himself disappointed in that expectation, sanguine as it was. He soon found means to be introduced to the house of a wealthy bourgeois, where every individual was charmed with his easy air and extraordinary qualifications. He accommodated himself surprizingly to the humours of the whole family; smoked tobacco, swallowed wine, and discoursed of stones with the husband, who was a rich jeweller; sacrificed himself to the pride and loquacity of the wife; and played upon the violin, and sung alternately, for the amusement of his only daughter, a buxom lass, nearly of his own age, the fruit of a former marriage.

It was not long before Ferdinand had reason to congratulate himself on the footing he had gained in this society. He had expected to find, and in a little time actually discovered, that mutual jealousy and rancour which almost always subsist between a daughter and her step dame, inflamed with all the virulence of female emulation; for the disparity in their ages served only to render them the more inveterate rivals in

the desire of captivating the other sex. Our adventurer having deliberated upon the means of converting this animosity to his own advantage, saw no method for this purpose so feasible, as that of making his approaches to the hearts of both, by ministering to each in private food for their reciprocal envy and malevolence: because he well knew that no road lies so direct and open to a woman's heart, as that of gratifying her passions of vanity and resentment.

When he had an opportunity of being particular with the mother, he expressed his concern for having unwittingly incurred the displeasure of Mademoiselle, which, he observed, was obvious in every circumstance of her behaviour towards him; protesting he was utterly innocent of all intention of offending her; and that he could not account for his disgrace any other way, than by supposing she took umbrage at the direction of his chief regards towards her mother-in-law, which, he owned, was altogether involuntary, being wholly influenced by that lady's superior charms and politeness.

Such a declaration was perfectly well calculated for the meridian of a dame like her, who with all the intoxication of unenlightened pride, and an increased appetite for pleasure, had begun to find herself neglected, and even to believe that her attractions were actually in the wane. She very graciously consoled our gallant for the mishap of which he complained; representing Wilhelmina (that was the daughter's name) as a pert, illiterate, envious baggage, of whose disgust he ought to make no consideration; then she recounted many instances of her own generosity to that young lady, with the returns of malice and ingratitude she had made; and, lastly, enumerated all the imperfections of her person, education, and behaviour; that he might see with what justice the gypsy pretended to vye with those who had been distinguished by the approbation, and even gallantry, of the best people in Vienna.

Having thus established himself her confident and gossip, he knew his next step of promotion would necessarily be to the degree of her lover; and, in that belief, resolved to play the same game with Mademoiselle Wilhelmina, whose complexion was very much a-kin to that of her step-mother: indeed, they resembled

bled each other too much to live upon any terms of friendship or even decorum. Fathom, in order to enjoy a private conversation with the young lady, never failed to repeat his visit every afternoon, till at length he had the pleasure of finding her disengaged, the jeweller being occupied among his workmen, and his wife gone to assist at a lying-in.

Our adventurer and the daughter had already exchanged their vows, by the expressive language of the eyes; he had even declared himself in some tender ejaculations which had been softly whispered in her ear, when he could snatch an opportunity of venting them unperceived; nay, he had upon divers occasions gently squeezed her fair hand, on pretence of tuning her harpsichord, and been favoured with returns of the same cordial pressure: so that instead of accosting her with the fearful hesitation and reserve of a timid swain, he told her, after the exercise of the *doux-yeux*, that he was come to confer with her upon a subject that nearly concerned her peace; and asked if she had not observed of late an evident abatement of friendship in her mother's behaviour to him, whom she had formerly treated with such marks of favour and respect. Mademoiselle would not pay so ill a compliment to her own discernment as to say she had not perceived the alteration, which, on the contrary, she owned was extremely palpable; nor was it difficult to divine the cause of such estranged looks. This remark was accompanied with an irresistible glance, she smiled enchanting, the colour deepened on her cheeks, her breast began to heave, and her whole frame underwent a most agreeable confusion.

Ferdinand was not a man to let such a favourable conjuncture pass unregarded. 'Yes, charming Wilhelmina!' exclaimed the politician in an affected rapture, 'the cause is as conspicuous as your attractions. She hath, in spite of all my circumspection, perceived that passion which it is not in my power to conceal, and in consequence of which, I now declare myself your devoted adorer: or, conscious of your superior excellence, her jealousy hath taken the alarm, and though stung with conjecture only, repines at the triumph of your perfections. How far this spirit of malignity may be in-

flamed to my prejudice, I know not: perhaps, as this is the first, it may be also the last opportunity, I shall have of avowing the dearest sentiments of my heart to the fair object that inspired them; in a word, I may be for ever excluded from your presence. Excuse me, then, divine creature! from the practice of those unnecessary forms, which I should take pride in observing, were I indulged with the ordinary privileges of an honourable lover; and, once for all, accept the homage of an heart overflowing with love and admiration. Yes, adorable Wilhelmina! I am dazzled with your supernatural beauty; your other accomplishments strike me with wonder and awe. I am enchanted by the graces of your deportment, ravished with the charms of your conversation; and there is a certain tenderness of benevolence in that endearing aspect, which, I trust, will not fail to melt with sympathy at the emotions of a faithful slave like me.'

So saying, he threw himself upon his knees, and seizing her plump hand, pressed it to his lips with all the violence of real transport. The nymph, whose passions nature had filled to the brim, could not hear such a rhapsody unmoved: being an utter stranger to addresses of this kind, she understood every word of it, in the literal acceptation; she believed implicitly in the truth of the encomiums he had bestowed, and thought it reasonable he should be rewarded for the justice he had done to her qualifications, which had hitherto been almost altogether overlooked: in short, her heart began to thaw, and her face to hang out the flag of capitulation; which was no sooner perceived by our hero, than he renewed his attack with redoubled fervour, pronouncing in a most vehement tone, 'Light of my eyes, and empress of my soul! behold me prostrate at your feet, waiting with the most pious resignation for that sentence from your lips on which my future happiness and misery must altogether depend. Not with more reverence does the unhappy bashaw kiss the sultan's letter that contains his doom, than I will submit to your fatal determination. Speak then, angelick sweetness! for, never, ah! never, will I rise from this suppliant posture, until I am encouraged to live and hope. No! if you refuse

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‘ to smile upon my passion, here shall I
 ‘ breathe the last sighs of a despairing
 ‘ lover: here shall this faithful sword do
 ‘ the last office to it’s unfortunate ma-
 ‘ ster, and shed the blood of the truest
 ‘ heart that ever felt the cruel pangs of
 ‘ disappointed love!’

The young lady, well nigh overcome by this effusion, which brought the tears into her eyes, ‘ Enough, enough,’ cried she, interrupting him, ‘ sure you men were created for the ruin of our sex.’ —Ruin,’ re-echoed Fathom, ‘ talk not of ruin and Wilhelmina! let these terms be for ever parted, far as the east and west asunder! let ever-smiling peace attend her steps, and love and joy still wanton in her train! Ruin, indeed, shall wait upon her enemies, if such there be, and those love-lorn wretches who pine with anguish under her disdain: grant me, kind Heaven a more propitious boon; direct her genial regards to one whose love is without example, and whose constancy is unparalleled; bear witness to my constancy and faith, ye verdant hills, ye fertile plains, ye shady groves, ye purling streams; and if I prove untrue, ah! let me never find a solitary willow or a bubbling brook, by help of which I may be enabled to put a period to my wretched life.’

Here this excellent actor began to sob most piteously, and the tender-hearted Wilhelmina, unable longer to withstand his moving tale, with a repetition of the interjection ‘ Ah!’ gently dropped into his arms. This was the beginning of a correspondence that soon rose to a very interesting pitch; and they forthwith concerted measures for carrying it on, without the knowledge or suspicion of her mother-in-law. Nevertheless, the young lady, vanquished as she was, and unskilled in the ways of men, would not all at once yield at discretion; but insisted upon those terms without which no woman’s reputation can be secured. Our lover, far from seeking to evade the proposal, assented to it in terms of uncommon satisfaction, and promised to use his whole industry in finding a priest, upon whose discretion they could rely; nay, he certainly resolved to comply with her request in good earnest, rather than forfeit the advantages which he foresaw in their union. His good fortune, however, exempted him from the necessity of taking such a step, which

at best must have been disagreeable: for so many difficulties occurred in the enquiry which was set on foot, and so artfully did Fathom in the mean time manage the influence he had already gained over her heart, that before her passion could obtain a legal gratification, she surrendered to his wish, without any other assurance than his solemn profession of sincerity and truth, on which she reposed herself with the most implicit confidence and faith.

C H A P. XIII.

HE IS EXPOSED TO A MOST PERILOUS INCIDENT IN THE COURSE OF HIS INTRIGUE WITH THE DAUGHTER.

HE was rejoiced to find her so easily satisfied in such a momentous concern; for the principal aim of the intrigue was to make her necessary to his interested views, and even, if possible, an associate in the fraudulent plans he had projected upon her father; consequently, he considered this relaxation in her virtue as an happy omen of his future success. All the obstacles to their mutual enjoyment being thus removed, our adventurer was by his mistress indulged with an assignation in her own chamber; which, though contiguous to that of her step-mother, was provided with a door that opened into a common stair-case, to which he had access at all hours of the night.

He did not neglect the rendezvous, but presenting himself at the appointed time, which was midnight, made the signal they had agreed upon, and was immediately admitted by Wilhelmina, who waited for him with a lover’s impatience. Fathom was not deficient in those expressions of rapture that are current on such occasions; but, on the contrary, became so loud in the transports of self congratulation, that his voice reached the ears of the vigilant step-mother, who wakening the jeweller from his first nap, gave him to understand, that some person was certainly in close conversation with his daughter; and exhorted him to rise forthwith, and vindicate the honour of his family.

The German, who was naturally of a phlegmatick habit, and never went to bed without a full dose of the creature,
 which

which added to his constitutional drowsiness, gave no ear to his wife's intimation, until she had repeated it thrice, and used other means to rouse him from the arms of slumber. Meanwhile, Fathom and his inamorata overheard her information, and our hero would have made his retreat immediately through the port by which he entered, had not his intention been over-ruled by the remonstrances of the young lady, who observed that the door was already fast bolted and could not possibly be opened without creating a noise that would confirm the suspicion of her parents; and that, over and above this objection, he would, in sallying from that door, run the risk of being met by her father, who in all probability would present himself before it, in order to hinder our hero's escape: she therefore conveyed him softly into her closet, where she assured him he might remain with great tranquillity, in full confidence that she would take such measures as would effectually screen him from detection.

He was fain to depend upon her assurance, and accordingly enconced himself behind her dressing-table; but he could not help sweating with apprehension, and praying fervently to God for his deliverance, when he heard the jeweller thundering at the door, and calling to his daughter for admittance. Wilhelmina, who was already undressed, and had purposely extinguished the light, pretended to be suddenly waked from her sleep, and starting up, exclaimed, in a tone of surprise and affright, 'Jesu, Maria! what is the matter?'—'Huffey!' replied the German, in a terrible accent, 'open the door this instant, there is a man in your bed-chamber; and by the lightning and thunder! I will wash away the stain he has cast upon my honour with the schellum's heart's blood.'

Not at all intimidated by this boisterous threat, she admitted him without hesitation; and with a shrillness of voice peculiar to herself, began to hold forth upon her own innocence and his unjust suspicion; mingling in her harangue sundry oblique hints against her mother-in-law, importing that some people were so viciously inclined by their own natures, that she did not wonder at their doubting the virtue of other people; but that these people despised the insinuations of such people, who ought to be

more circumspect in their own conduct, lest they themselves should suffer reprisals from those people whom they had so maliciously slandered.

Having uttered these flowers of rhetoric, which were calculated for the hearing of her step-dame, who stood with a light at her husband's back, the young lady assumed an ironical air, and admonished her father to search every corner of her apartment; she even affected to assist his inquiry; with her own hands pulled out a parcel of small drawers, in which her trinkets were contained; desired him to look into her needle-case and thimble, and seeing his examination fruitless, earnestly intreated him to rummage her closet also, saying with a sneer, that in all probability the dishonourer would be found in that lurking-place. The manner in which she pretended to ridicule his apprehensions, made an impression upon the jeweller, who was very well disposed to retreat into his own nest; when his wife, with a certain slyness in her countenance, besought him to comply with his daughter's request, and look into that same closet, by which means Wilhelmina's virtue would obtain a compleat triumph.

Our adventurer, who overheard the conversation, was immediately seized with a palsy of fear: he trembled at every joint; the sweat trickled down his forehead; his teeth began to chatter; his hair to stand on end; and he in his heart bitterly cursed the daughter's petulance, the mother's malice, together with his own precipitation, by which he was involved in an adventure so pregnant with danger and disgrace. Indeed, the reader may easily conceive his disorder, when he heard the key turning in the lock, and the German swearing that he would make him food for the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air.

Fathom had come unprepared with weapons of defence, was naturally an economist of his person, and saw himself on the brink of forfeiting not only the promised harvest of his double intrigue, but also the reputation of a man of honour, upon which all his future hopes depended: his agony was therefore unspeakable, when the door flew open; and it was not till after a considerable pause of recollection, that he perceived the candle extinguished by the motion of the air produced from the German's sudden irruption. This accident,

cident, which disconcerted him so much as to put a full stop to his charge, was very favourable to our hero; who, summoning all his presence of mind, crept up into the chimney, while the jeweller stood at the door, waiting for his wife's return with another light; so that when the closet was examined, there was nothing found to justify the report which the step-mother had made; and the father, after having made a slight apology to Wilhelmina for his intrusion, retired with his yoke-fellow into their own chamber.

The young lady, who little thought that her papa would have taken her at her word, was overwhelmed with confusion and dismay when she saw him enter the closet, and had her lover been discovered, would in all probability have been the loudest in his reproach, and perhaps have accused him of an intention to rob the house; but she was altogether astonished when she found he had made shift to elude the inquiry of her parents, because she could not conceive the possibility of his escaping by the window, which was in the third story, at a prodigious distance from the ground; and how he could conceal himself in the apartment, was a mystery which she could by no means unfold. Before her father and mother retired, she lighted her lamp, on pretence of being afraid to be in the dark, after the perturbation of spirits she had undergone, and her room was no sooner evacuated of such troublesome visitants, than she secured the doors, and went in quest of her lover.

Accordingly, every corner of the closet underwent a new search, and she called upon his name with a soft voice, which she thought no other person would overhear: but Ferdinand did not think proper to gratify her impatience, because he could not judge of the predicament in which he stood by the evidence of all his senses, and would not relinquish his post until he should be better certified that the coast was clear. Meanwhile, his dulcinea having performed her inquiry to no purpose, imagined there was something preternatural in the circumstance of his vanishing so unaccountably, and began to cross herself with great devotion. She returned to her chamber, fixed the lamp in the fire-place, and throwing herself upon the bed, gave way to the suggestions of her superstition, which were reinforced by the si-

lence that prevailed, and the gloomy glimmering of the light. She reflected upon the trespass she had already committed in her heart; and, in the conjectures of her fear, believed that her lover was no other than the devil himself, who had assumed the appearance of Fathom, in order to tempt and seduce her virtue.

While her imagination teemed with these horrible ideas, our adventurer concluding from the general stillness that the jeweller and his wife were at last happily asleep, ventured to come forth from his hiding-place, and stood before his mistress, all begrimed with soot. Wilhelmina lifting up her eyes, and seeing this sable apparition, which she mistook for Satan *in propria persona*, instantly screamed, and began to repeat her pater-noster with an audible voice: upon which Ferdinand, foreseeing that her parents would be again alarmed, would not stay to undeceive her, and explain himself; but unlocking the door with great expedition, ran down stairs, and luckily accomplished his escape. This was undoubtedly the wisest measure he could have taken: for he had not performed one half of his descent toward the street, when the German was at his daughter's bed-side, demanding to know the cause of her exclamation: she then gave him an account of what she had seen, with all the exaggerations of her own fancy, and after having weighed the circumstances of her story, he interpreted the apparition into a thief, who had found means to open the door that communicated with the stair, but having been scared by Wilhelmina's shriek, had been obliged to retreat before he could execute his purpose.

Our hero's spirits were so woefully disturbed by this adventure, that for a whole week he felt no inclination to visit his inamorata, and was not without apprehension that the affair had terminated in an explanation very little to his advantage. He was, however, delivered from this disagreeable suspense by an accidental meeting with the jeweller himself, who kindly chid him for his long absence, and entertained him in the street with an account of the alarm which his family had sustained by a thief, who broke into Wilhelmina's apartment. Glad to find his apprehension mistaken, he renewed his correspondence with the family, and in a lit-

the time found reason to console himself for the jeopardy and panick he had undergone.

C H A P. XIV.

HE IS REDUCED TO A DREADFUL DILEMMA, IN CONSEQUENCE OF AN ASSIGNATION WITH THE WIFE.

NOR was his whole care and attention engrossed by the execution of this scheme upon the daughter. While he managed his concerns in that quarter with incredible ardour and application, he was not the less indefatigable in the prosecution of his design upon the mother-in-law, which he forwarded with all his art, during those opportunities he enjoyed in the absence of Wilhelmina, who was frequently called away by the domestick duties of the house. The passions of the jeweller's wife were in such a state of exaltation as exempted our hero from the repulses and fatigue attending a long siege.

We have already observed how cunningly he catered for the gratification of her ruling appetite, and have exhibited pregnant proofs of his ability in gaining upon the human heart; the reader will not therefore be surprized at the rapidity of his conquest over the affections of a lady whose complexion was perfectly amorous, and whose vanity laid her open to all the attempts of adulation. In a word, matters were quickly brought to such a mutual understanding, that one evening, while they amused themselves at lansquenet, Fathom conjured her to give him the rendezvous next day at the house of any third person of her own sex, in whose discretion she could confide; and after a few affected scruples on her side, which he well knew how to surmount, she complied with his request, and the circumstances of the appointment were settled accordingly. After this treaty, their satisfaction rose to such a warmth, and the conversation became so reciprocally endearing, that our gallant expressed his impatience of waiting so long for the accomplishment of his wishes; and, with the most eager transport, begged she would, if possible, curtail the term of his expectation, that his brain might not suffer by his standing

so many tedious hours on the giddy verge of rapture.

The dame, who was naturally compassionate, sympathized with his condition; and, unable to resist his pathetick supplications, gave him to understand that his desire could not be granted without subjecting them both to some hazard, but that she was disposed to run any risk in behalf of his happiness and peace. After this affectionate preamble, she told him that her husband was then engaged in a quarterly meeting of the jewellers, from whence he never failed to return quite overwhelmed with wine, tobacco, and the phlegm of his own constitution; so that he would fall fast asleep as soon as his head should touch the pillow, and she be at liberty to entertain the lover without interruption, provided he could find means to deceive the jealous vigilance of Wilhelmina, and conceal himself in some corner of the house, unsuspected and unperceived.

Our lover remembering his adventure with the daughter, would have willingly dispensed with this expedient, and began to repent of the eagerness with which he had preferred his solicitation; but seeing there was now no opportunity of retracting with honour, he affected to enter heartily into the conversation, and after much canvassing, it was determined that while Wilhelmina was employed in the kitchen, the mother should conduct our adventurer to the outward door, where he should pay the compliment of parting, so as to be overheard by the young lady, but in the mean time glide softly into the jeweller's bed-chamber, which was a place they imagined least liable to the effects of a daughter's prying disposition; and conceal himself in a large press or wardrobe, that stood in one corner of the apartment. The scene was immediately acted with great success, and our hero cooped up in his cage, where he waited so long, that his desires began to subside, and his imagination to aggravate the danger of his situation.

'Suppose,' said he to himself, 'this brutal German, instead of being stupefied with wine, should come home inflamed with brandy, to the use of which he is sometimes addicted; far from feeling any inclination to sleep, he will labour under the most fretful

F anxiety

‘anxiety of watching; every irascible particle in his disposition will be exasperated; he will be offended with every object that may present itself to his view, and if there is the least ingredient of jealousy in his temper, it will manifest itself in riot and rage. What if his frenzy should prompt him to search his wife’s chamber for gallants? this would certainly be the first place to which he would direct his enquiry; or, granting this supposition chimerical, I may be seized with an irresistible inclination to cough, before he is oppressed with sleep; he may be waked by the noise I shall make in disengaging myself from this embarrassed situation; and finally, I may find it impracticable to retire unseen or unheard, after every thing else shall have succeeded to my wish.’

These suggestions did not at all contribute to the quiet of our adventurer, who having waited three whole hours in the most uncomfortable suspense, heard the jeweller brought into the room in that very condition which his fears had prognosticated. He had, it seems, quarrelled over his cups with another tradesman, and received a salutation on the forehead with a candlestick, which not only left an ignominious and painful mark upon his countenance, but even disordered his brain to a very dangerous degree of delirium; so that instead of allowing himself quietly to be undressed and put to bed by his wife, he answered all her gentle admonitions and caresses with the most opprobrious invectives and obstreperous behaviour; and though he did not tax her with infidelity to his bed, he virulently accused her of extravagance and want of œconomy, observed her expensive way of living would bring him to a morsel of bread; and unfortunately recollecting the attempt of the supposed thief, started up from his chair, swearing by God’s mother, that he would forthwith arm himself with a brace of pistols, and search every apartment of the house. ‘That prefs,’ said he with great vociferation, ‘may, for aught I know, be the receptacle of some ruffian.’

So saying, he approached the ark in which Fathom was embarked; and exclaiming, ‘Come forth, Satan!’ applied his foot to the door of it with such violence as threw him from the centre of gravity, and laid him sprawling on his

back. This address made such an impression upon our adventurer, that he had well nigh obeyed the summons, and burst from his concealment, in a desperate effort to escape without being recognized by the intoxicated German; and, indeed, had the application been repeated, he in all likelihood would have tried the experiment; for by this time his terrors had waxed too strong to be much longer suppressed: from this hazardous enterprise he was however exempted, by a lucky accident that happened to his disturber, whose head chancing to pitch upon the corner of a chair in his fall, he was immediately lulled into a trance; during which, the considerate lady guessing the disorder of her gallant, and dreading farther interruption, very prudently released him from his confinement, after she had put out the light, and in the dark conveyed him to the door, where he was comforted with the promise that she would punctually remember the rendezvous of next day.

She then invoked the assistance of the servants, who being waked for the purpose, lifted up their master, and tumbled him into bed; while Ferdinand hid him home in an universal sweat, blessing himself from any future achievement of that sort, in an house where he had been twice in such imminent danger of life and reputation. Nevertheless, he did not fail to honour the assignation, and avail himself of the disposition his mistress manifested, to make him all the recompence in her power for the disappointment and chagrin which he had undergone.

CHAP. XV.

BUT AT LENGTH SUCCEEDS IN HIS ATTEMPT UPON BOTH.

HAVING thus gained a complete victory over the affections of these two ladies, he began to convert his good fortune to the purposes of that principle, from which his view was never, no not for a moment, detached. In other words, he used them as ministers and purveyors to his avarice and fraud. As for the mother-in-law, she was of herself so liberal as to anticipate the wishes of any moderate adventurer, and presented him with sundry valuable jewels, as memorials of her esteem: nor

nor was the daughter backward in such expressions of regard; she already considered his interest as her own, and took frequent opportunities of secreting for his benefit, certain stray trinkets that she happened to pick up in her excursions within doors.

All these gratifications he received with demonstrations of infinite constraint and reluctance, and in the midst of his rapacious extortion, acted so cunningly as to impose himself upon both for a miracle of disinterested integrity. Yet not contented with what he thus could earn, and despairing of being able to steer the bark of his fortune for any length of time, between two such dangerous quicksands, he resolved to profit by the occasion while it lasted, and strike some considerable stroke at once. A plan was formed in consequence of this determination, and at an appointment with the mother, in the house of their female friend, our adventurer appeared with an air of dejection, which he veiled with a thin cover of forced pleasantry, that his mistress might suppose he endeavoured to conceal some mortal chagrin that preyed upon his heart.

The stratagem succeeded to his wish. She observed his countenance between whiles over-cast, took notice of the involuntary sighs he heaved; and with the most tender expressions of sympathy, conjured him to make her acquainted with the cause of his affliction. Instead of gratifying her request immediately, he evaded her questions with a respectful reserve, implying, that his love would not suffer him to make her a partner in his sorrow; and this delicacy on his part, whetted her impatience and concern to such a degree, that rather than keep her in such an agony of doubt and apprehension, he was prevailed upon to tell her, that he had been the preceding night, engaged with a company of his fellow-students, where he had made too free with the champaigne, so that his caution forsook him, and he had been decoyed into play by a Tyroleze gamester, who stripped him of all his ready-money, and obtained from him an obligation for two hundred florins, which he could not possibly pay, without having recourse to his relation the Count De Melville, who would have just cause to be incensed at his extravagance.

This information he concluded, by

declaring, that cost what it would, he was resolved to make a candid confession of the truth, and throw himself entirely upon the generosity of his patron, who could inflict no other punishment than that of discarding him from his favour and protection; a misfortune which, how grievous soever it might be, he should be able to sustain with fortitude, could he fall upon some method of satisfying the Tyroleze, who was very importunate and savage in his demand. His kind mistress no sooner found out the source of his inquietude, than she promised to dry it up; assuring him, that next day, at the same hour, she would enable him to discharge the debt; so that he might set his heart at ease, and recollect that gaiety which was the soul of her enjoyment.

He expressed the utmost astonishment at this generous proffer, which, however, he declined with an affected earnestness of refusal, protesting that he should be extremely mortified, if he thought she looked upon him as one of those mercenary gallants, who could make such a sordid use of a lady's affection. 'No, Madam,' cried our politician, in a pathetick strain; 'what ever happens, I shall never part with that internal consolation that conscious honour never fails to yield in the deepest scenes of solitary distress: the attachment I have the honour to profess for your amiable person, is not founded on such inglorious motives; but is the genuine result of that generous passion, which none but the noble-minded feel; and the only circumstance of this misfortune that I dread to encounter is, the necessity of withdrawing myself for ever from the presence of her whose genial smiles could animate my soul against all the persecutions of adverse fortune.'

This declamation, accompanied with a profound sigh, served only to inflame her desire of extricating him from the difficulty in which he was involved. She exhausted all her eloquence in attempting to persuade him that his refusal was an outrage against her affection: he pretended to refute her arguments, and remained unshaken by all the power of her solicitations; until she had recourse to the most passionate remonstrances of love, and fell at his feet in the posture of a forlorn shepherdess. What he refused to her reason, he granted to her

tears, because his heart was melted by her affliction, and next day condescended to accept of her money, out of pure regard to her happiness and peace.

Encouraged by the success of this achievement, he resolved to practise the same experiment upon Wilhelmina, in hope of extracting an equal share of profit from her simplicity and attachment; and at their very next nocturnal rendezvous in her chamber, re-acted the farce already rehearsed, with a small variation, which he thought necessary to stimulate the young lady in his behalf. He rightly concluded, that she was by no means mistress of such a considerable sum as he had already extorted from her mother; and therefore thought proper to represent himself in the most urgent predicament, that her apprehension on his account might be so alarmed, as to engage her in some enterprize for his advantage, which otherwise she would never have dreamed of undertaking. With this view, after having described his own calamitous situation, in consequence of her pressing intreaties, which he affected to evade, he gave her to understand, that there was no person upon earth, to whom he would have recourse in this emergency; for which reason, he was determined to rid himself of all his cares at once, upon the friendly point of his own faithful sword.

Such a dreadful resolution could not fail to operate upon the tender passions of his dulcinea; she was instantly seized with an agony of fear and distraction; her grief manifested itself in a flood of tears, while she hung round his neck, conjuring him in the most melting terms, by their mutual love, in which they had been so happy, to lay aside that fatal determination, which would infallibly involve her in the same fate; for, she took Heaven to witness, that she would not one moment survive the knowledge of his death.

He was not deficient in expressions of reciprocal regard: he extolled her love and tenderness with a most extravagant eulogium, and seemed wrung with mortal anguish at the prospect of parting for ever from his lovely Wilhelmina; but his honour was a stern and rigid creditor, that could not be appeased, except with his blood; and all the boon she could obtain, by dint of the most woeful supplication, was a

promise to defer the execution of his baleful purpose for the space of four and twenty hours, during which, she hoped, Heaven would compassionate her sufferings, and inspire her with some contrivance for their mutual relief. Thus he yielded to her fervent request, rather with a view to calm the present transports of her sorrow, than with any expectation of seeing himself redeemed from his fate by her interposition; such at least were his professions, when he took his leave, assuring her, that he would not quit his being, before he should have devoted a few hours to another interview with the dear object of his love.

Having thus kindled the train, he did not doubt that the mine of his craft would take effect, and repaired to his own lodging, in full persuasion of seeing his aim accomplished, before the time fixed for their last assignation. His prognostick was next morning verified by the arrival of a messenger, who brought to him a small parcel, to which was cemented with sealing-wax the following epistle.

‘ JEWEL OF MY SOUL !

‘ SCARCE had you, last night, ‘ quitted my disconsolate arms, ‘ when I happily recollected that there ‘ was in my possession a gold chain, ‘ of value more than sufficient to answer the exigence of your present occasions: it was pledged to my grandfather for two hundred crowns, by a ‘ knight of Malta, who soon after perished in a sea engagement with the ‘ enemies of our faith; so that it became the property of our house, and ‘ was bequeathed to me by the old gentleman, as a memorial of his particular affection. Upon whom can I ‘ more properly bestow it, than him ‘ who is already master of my heart! ‘ receive it, therefore, from the bearer ‘ of this billet, and convert it without ‘ scruple to that use which shall be most ‘ conducive to your ease and satisfaction; nor seek, from a too romantick ‘ notion of honour, which I know you ‘ entertain, to excuse yourself from accepting this testimony of my affection: ‘ for, I have already sworn before an ‘ image of our blessed lady, that I will ‘ no longer own you as the sovereign ‘ of my heart, nor even indulge you ‘ with

with another interview, if you reject this mark of tenderness and concern, from your ever faithful

‘WILHELMINA.’

The heart of our adventurer began to bound with joy, when he surveyed the contents of this letter; and his eyes sparkled with transport at sight of the chain, which he immediately perceived to be worth twice the sum she had mentioned. Nevertheless, he would not avail himself without farther question of her generosity; but, that same night, repairing to her apartment at the usual hour of meeting, he prostrated himself before her, and, counterfeiting extreme agitation of spirit, begged, in the most urgent terms, not even unaccompanied with tears, that she would take back the present which he tendered for her acceptance; and spare him the most insufferable mortification of thinking himself exposed to the imputation of being mercenary in his love. Such, he said, was the delicacy of his passion, that he could not possibly exist under the apprehension of incurring a censure so unworthy of his sentiments; and he would a thousand times sooner undergo the persecution of his rancorous creditor, than bear the thought of being in the smallest consideration lessened in her esteem: nay, so far did he carry his pretensions to punctilio, as to protest, that should she refuse to quiet the scruples of his honour, on this score, her unyielding beneficence would serve only to hasten the execution of his determined purpose, to withdraw himself at once from a life of vanity and misfortune.

The more pathetically he pleaded for her compliance, the more strenuously did she resist his remonstrances. She advanced all the arguments her reason, love, and terror could suggest; reminded him of her oath, from which he could not suppose she would recede, whatever the consequence might be; and, in conclusion, vowed to Heaven, with great solemnity and devotion, that she would not survive the news of his death. Thus the alternative she offered, was either to retain the chain and be happy in her affection, or forfeit all title to her love, and die in the conviction of having brought his innocent mistress to an untimely grave.

His fortitude was not proof against

this last consideration. ‘My savage honour,’ said he, ‘would enable me to endure the pangs of eternal separation, in the confidence of being endowed with the power of ending these tortures by the energy of my own hand; but the prospect of Wilhelmina’s death, and that too occasioned by my inflexibility, disarms my soul of all her resolution, swallows up the dictates of my jealous pride, and fills my bosom with such a gush of tenderness and sorrow, as overwhelms the whole œconomy of my purpose! Yes, enchanting creature! I sacrifice my glory to that irresistible reflection: and, rather than know myself the cruel instrument of robbing the world of such perfection, consent to retain the fatal testimony of your love.’

So saying, he pocketed the chain, with an air of ineffable mortification; and was rewarded for his compliance with the most endearing caresses of his dulcinea; who, amidst the tumults of her joy, ejaculated a thousand acknowledgments to Heaven, for having blessed her with the affection of such a man, whose honour was unrivalled by any thing but his love.

CHAP. XVI.

HIS SUCCESS REGETS A BLIND SECURITY, BY WHICH HE IS ONCE AGAIN WELL NIGH ENTRAPPED IN HIS DULCINEA’S APARTMENT.

IN this manner did the crafty Fathom turn to account those ingratiating qualifications he inherited from nature; and maintain with incredible assiduity and circumspection, an amorous correspondence with two domestick rivals, who watched the conduct of each other with the most indefatigable virulence of envious suspicion; until an accident happened, which had well nigh overturned the bark of his policy, and induced him to alter the course, that he might not be shipwrecked on the rocks that began to multiply in the prosecution of his present voyage.

The jeweller, who, as a German, wanted neither pride nor ostentation, never failed to celebrate the anniversary of his birth, by an annual feast granted to his neighbours and friends; and, on these occasions, was accustomed to wear that

that chain, which, though bequeathed to his daughter, he considered as an ornament appertaining to the family, whereof he himself was head: accordingly, when the time of this festival revolved, he as usual ordered Wilhelmina to surrender it for the day. This injunction, the reader will perceive, our young lady was in no condition to obey; she had, however, foreseen the demand, and contrived a scheme of behaviour for the occasion, which she forthwith put in execution.

With an air of uncommon cheerfulness purposely assumed, she retired to her closet, on pretence of complying with his desire, and having employed a few minutes in rummaging her drawers, and disordering her moveables, uttered a loud shriek, that brought her father instantly into the apartment, where he found his daughter tossing about her cloaths and trinkets with violent demonstrations of disorder and affright, and heard her in a lamentable strain declare, that she was robbed of her chain, and for ever undone. This was so far from being an agreeable intimation to the jeweller, that he was struck dumb with astonishment and vexation; and it was not till after a long pause, that he pronounced the word, '*Sacrament!*' with an emphasis denoting the most mortifying surprize.

Soon as that exclamation escaped from his lips, he flew to the *escritore* as if instinctively, and joining Wilhelmina in her occupation, tumbled it's whole contents upon the floor in a trice.

While he was thus employed, in the most expressive silence, the wife of his bosom chanced to pass that way; and seeing them both occupied with such violence and trepidation, believed at first that they were certainly actuated by the spirit of frenzy; but when she interposed, by asking with great earnestness, the cause of such transports and distracted behaviour; and heard her husband reply with an accent of despair, 'The chain! the chain of my forefathers is no more.' She immediately justified his emotion, by undergoing the same alarm, and without farther hesitation engaged herself in the search, beginning with a song, which might be compared to the hymn of battle among the Greeks, or rather more aptly to that which the Spartan females sung round the altar of Diana, surnamed *Oithia*; for, it was

attended with strange gesticulations, and in the course of utterance became so loud and shrill, that the guests, who were by this time partly assembled, being confounded at the clamour, rushed towards the place from whence it seemed to proceed, and found their landlord, with his wife and daughter, in the attitudes of distraction and despair.

When they understood the nature of the case, they consoled the family on their misfortune, and would have retired, on the supposition that it would defeat the mirthful intent of their meeting; but the jeweller mustering up his whole temper and hospitality, intreated them to excuse his disorder, and favour him with their company, which, he observed, was now more than ever wanted, to dispel the melancholy ideas inspired by his loss. Notwithstanding this apology, and the efforts he made in the sequel to entertain his friends with jollity and good-humour, his heart was so linked to the chain, that he could not detach himself from the thoughts of it, which invaded him at short intervals in such qualms as effectually spoiled his appetite and hindered his digestion.

He revolved within himself the circumstances of his disaster, and in canvassing all the probable means by which the chain could be stolen, concluded that the deed must have been done by some person in the family, who, in consequence of having access to his daughter's chamber, had either found the drawer left open by her carelessness and neglect, or found means to obtain a false key, by some waxen impression: for the locks of the *escritore* were safe and uninjured. His suspicion being thus confined within his own house, sometimes pitched upon his workmen, and sometimes upon his wife; who, he thought, was the more likely to practise such finess, as she considered Wilhelmina in the light of a daughter-in-law, whose interest interfered with her own, and who had often harangued to him in private, on the folly of leaving this very chain in the young lady's possession.

The more he considered this subject, he thought he saw the more reason to attribute the damage he had sustained to the machinations of his spouse; who, he did not doubt, was disposed to feather her own nest, at the expence of him and his heirs; and who, with the same

honest

honest intention, had already secreted for her private use those inconsiderable jewels, which of late had at different times been missing. Aroused by these sentiments, he resolved to retaliate her own schemes, by contriving means to visit her cabinet in secret, and if possible, to rob the robber of the spoils she had gathered to his prejudice, without coming to any explanation, which might end in domestick turmoils and eternal disquiet.

While the husband exercised his reflection in this manner, his innocent mate did not allow the powers of her imagination to rest in idleness and sloth. Her observations touching the loss of the chain were such, as a suspicious woman, biassed by hatred and envy, would naturally make. To her it seemed highly improbable, that a thing of such value, so carefully deposited, should vanish without the connivance of its keeper; and without much expence of conjecture, divined the true manner in which it was conveyed. The sole difficulty that occurred in the researches of her sagacity, was to know the gallant who had been favoured with such a pledge of Wilhelmina's affection; for, as the reader will easily imagine, she never dreamed of viewing Ferdinand in that odious perspective. In order to satisfy her curiosity, discover this happy favourite, and be revenged on her petulant rival, she prevailed upon the jeweller to employ a scout, who should watch all night upon the stair, without the knowledge of any other person in the family; alledging, that in all likelihood, the house-maid gave private admittance to some lover, who was the author of all the losses they had lately suffered, and that they might possibly detect him in his nocturnal adventures; and observing, that it would be imprudent to intimate their design to Wilhelmina, lest through the heedlessness and indiscretion of youth, the might chance to divulge the secret, so as to frustrate their aim.

A Swiss, in whose honesty the German could confide, being hired for this purpose, was posted in a dark corner of the stair-case, within a few paces of the door, which he was directed to watch; and actually stood centinel three nights, without perceiving the least object of suspicion; but on the fourth, the evil stars of our adventurer conducted him

to the spot, on his voyage to the apartment of his dulcinea, with whom he had pre-concerted the assignation. Having made the signal, which consisted of two gentle taps on her door, he was immediately admitted; and the Swiss no sooner saw him fairly housed, than he crept softly to the other door, that was left open for the purpose, and gave immediate intimation of what he had perceived: this intelligence, however, he could not convey so secretly, but the lovers, who were always vigilant upon these occasions, overheard a sort of commotion in the jeweller's chamber, the cause of which their apprehension was ingenious enough to comprehend.

We have formerly observed, that our adventurer could not make his retreat by the door, without running a very great risk of being detected, and the expedient of the chimney he had no inclination to repeat; so that he found himself in a very uncomfortable dilemma, and was utterly abandoned by all his invention and address; when his mistress, in a whisper, desired him to begin a dialogue aloud, in an apology, importing, that he had mistaken the door; and that his intention was to visit her father touching a ring belonging to the young Count Melville, which the knew Fathom had put into his hands in order to be altered.

Ferdinand seizing the hint, availed himself of it without delay, and unbolting the door, pronounced in an audible voice, 'Upon my honour, Mademoiselle, you wrong my intention, if you imagine I came hither with any disrespectful or dishonourable motive: I have business with your father, which cannot be delayed till to-morrow, without manifest prejudice to my friend and myself; therefore I took the liberty of visiting him at these untimely hours; and it has been my misfortune to mistake the door in the dark. I beg pardon for my involuntary intrusion; and again assure you, that nothing was farther from my thoughts, than any design to violate that respect which I have always entertained for you and your father's family.'

To this remonstrance, which was distinctly heard by the German and his wife, who by this time stood listening at the door, the young lady replied in a shrill accent of displeasure, 'Sir, I am bound to believe that all your actions
' are

'are conducted by honour; but, you must give me leave to tell you, that your mistake is a little extraordinary, and your visit, even to my father, at this time of the night, altogether unreasonable, if not mysterious. As for the interruption I have suffered in my repose, I impute it to my own forgetfulness, in leaving my door unlocked; and blame myself so severely for the omission, that I shall to-morrow put it out of my own power to be guilty of the like for the future, by ordering the passage to be nailed up: mean while, if you would persuade me of your well-meaning, you will instantly withdraw, lest my reputation should suffer by your continuance in my apartment.'

'Madam,' answered our hero, 'I will not give you an opportunity to repeat the command, which I shall forthwith obey, after having intreated you once more to forgive the disturbance I have given.' So saying, he gently opened the door, and at sight of the German and his wife, who he well knew waited for his exit, started back, and gave tokens of confusion, which were partly real, and partly affected. The jeweller, fully satisfied with Fathom's declaration to his daughter, received him with a complaisant look; and, in order to alleviate his concern, gave him to understand that he already knew the reason of his being in that apartment, and desired to be informed of what had procured him the honour to see him at such a juncture.

'My dear friend,' said our adventurer, pretending to recollect himself with difficulty, 'I am utterly ashamed and confounded to be discovered in this situation; but as you have overheard what passed between Mademoiselle and me, I know you will do justice to my intention, and forgive my mistake. After begging pardon for having intruded upon your family at these hours, I must now tell you, that my cousin Count Melville was some time ago so much misrepresented to his mother, by certain malicious informers, who delight in sowing discord in private families, that she actually believed her son an extravagant spendthrift, who had not only consumed his remittances in the most riotous scenes of disorder, but also indulged a pernicious appetite for gaming to such a

degree, that he had lost all his cloaths and jewels at play. In consequence of such false information, she expostulated with him in a severe letter, and desired he would transmit to her that ring which is in your custody, it being a family stone, for which she expressed an inestimable value. The young gentleman, in his answer to her request, endeavoured to vindicate himself from the aspersions which had been cast upon his character; and with regard to the ring, told her it was at present in the hands of a jeweller, in order to be new set, according to her own directions, and that whenever it should be altered, he would send it home to her by some safe conveyance. This account the good lady took for an evasion, and upon that supposition has again written to him, in such a provoking style, that although the letter arrived but half an hour ago, he is determined to dispatch a courier before morning with the mischievous ring, for which, in compliance with the impetuosity of his temper, I have taken the freedom to disturb you at this unseasonable hour.'

The German paid implicit faith to every circumstance of this story, which indeed could not well be supposed to be invented extempore; the ring was immediately restored, and our adventurer took his leave, congratulating himself upon his signal deliverance from the snare in which he had fallen.

C H A P. XVII.

THE STEP-DAME'S SUSPICIONS BEING AWAKENED, SHE LAYS A SNARE FOR OUR ADVENTURER, FROM WHICH HE IS DELIVERED BY THE INTERPOSITION OF HIS GOOD GENIUS.

THOUGH the husband swallowed the bait without farther inquiry, the penetration of the wife was not so easily deceived: that same dialogue in Wilhelmina's apartment, far from allaying, rather inflamed her suspicion; because, in the like emergency, she herself had once profited by the same, or nearly the same contrivance. Without communicating her doubts to the father, she resolved to double her attention to the daughter's future conduct, and keep such

such a strict eye over the behaviour of our gallant, that he should find it very difficult, if not impossible, to elude her observation. For this purpose, she took into her pay an old maiden, of the right sour disposition, who lived in an house opposite to her own, and directed her to follow the young lady in all her outgoings, whenever she should receive from the window a certain signal, which the mother-in-law agreed to make for the occasion. It was not long before this scheme succeeded to her wish. The door of communication betwixt Wilhelmina's apartment and the stair case being nailed up by the jeweller's express order, our adventurer was altogether deprived of those opportunities he had hitherto enjoyed; and was not at all mortified to find himself so restricted in a correspondence which began to be tiresome and disagreeable: but the case was far otherwise with his dulcinea, whose passion, the more it was thwarted, raged with greater violence; like a fire that, from the attempts that are made to extinguish it, gathers greater force, and flames with double fury.

Upon the second day of her misfortune, she had written a very tender billet, lamenting her unhappiness in being deprived of those meetings which constituted the chief joy of her life, and intreating him to contrive some means of renewing the delicious commerce in an unsuspected place. This intimation she proposed to convey privately into the hand of her lover, during his next visit to the family; but both were so narrowly eyed by the mother, that she found the execution of her design impracticable; and next forenoon, on pretence of going to church, repaired to the house of a companion, who, being also her confidante, undertook to deliver the billet with her own hand.

The she-dragon employed by her mother, in obedience to the sign which was displayed from the window, immediately put on her veil, and followed Wilhelmina at a distance, until she saw her fairly housed; she would not even then return from her excursion, but hovered about in sight of the door, with a view of making farther observations: in less than five minutes after the young lady disappeared, the scout perceived her coming out, accompanied by her comrade, from whom she instantly parted, and bent her way towards the church in

good earnest, while the other steered her course in another direction. The duenna, after a moment's suspense and consideration, divined the true cause of this short visit, and resolved to watch the motions of the confidante, whom she traced to the academy in which our hero lodged, and from which she saw her return, after the supposed message was delivered.

Fraught with this intelligence, the rancorous understrapper, hied her home to the jeweller's wife, and made a faithful recital of what she had seen; communicating, at the same time, her own conjectures on the subject. Her employer was equally astonished and incensed at this information; she was seized with all that frenzy which takes possession of a slighted woman, when she finds herself supplanted by a detested rival; and, in the first transports of her indignation, devoted them as sacrifices to her vengeance; nor was her surprize so much the effect of his dissimulation, as of his want of taste and discernment. She inveighed against him, not as the most treacherous lover, but as the most abject wretch, in courting the smiles of such an awkward dowdy, while he enjoyed the favours of a woman who had numbered princes in the train of her admirers. For the brilliancy of her attractions, such as they at present shone, she appealed to the decision of her minister, who consulted her own satisfaction and interest, by flattering the other's vanity and repentment; and so unaccountable did the depravity of our hero's judgment appear to this conceited dame, that she began to believe there was some mistake in the person, and to hope that Wilhelmina's gallant was not in reality her professed admirer Mr. Fathom, but rather one of his fellow-lodgers, whose passion he favoured with his meditation and assistance.

On this notion, which nothing but mere vanity could have inspired, in opposition to so many more weighty presumptions, she took the resolution of bringing the affair to a fuller explanation, before she would concert any measures to the prejudice of our adventurer, and forthwith dispatched her spy back to his lodgings, to solicit on the part of Wilhelmina an immediate answer to the letter he had received. This was an expedition with which the old maiden would have willingly dispensed, because

it was founded upon an uncertainty, which might be attended with troublesome consequences; but rather than be the means of retarding a negociation, so productive of that sort of mischief which is particularly agreeable to all of her tribe, she undertook to manage and effect the discovery, in full confidence of her own talents and experience.

With such a fund of self-sufficiency and instigation, she repaired to the academy on the instant, and enquiring for Mr. Fathom, was introduced to his apartment, where she found him in the very act of writing a billet to the jeweller's daughter. The artful agent having asked, with the mysterious air of an expert go between, if he had not lately received a message from a certain young lady; and being answered in the affirmative, gave him to understand, that she herself was a person favoured with the friendship and confidence of Wilhelmina, whom she had known from her cradle, and often dandled on her knee; then, in the genuine style of a prattling dry-nurse, she launched out in encomiums on his dulcinea's beauty and sweetness of temper, recounting many simple occurrences of her infancy and childhood; and finally, desiring a more circumstantial answer to that which she had sent to him by her friend Catherina. In the course of her loquacity she had also, according to her instructions, hinted at the misfortune of the door; and, on the whole, performed her cue with such dexterity and discretion, that our politician was actually over-reached, and having finished his epistle, committed it to her care, with many verbal expressions of eternal love and fidelity to his charming Wilhelmina.

The messenger doubly rejoiced at her achievement, which not only recommended her ministry, but also gratified her malice, returned to her principal with great exultation; and, delivering the letter, the reader will easily conceive the transports of that lady, when she read the contents of it in these words.

‘ANGELICK WILHELMINA!’

‘TO forget those extatick scenes we have enjoyed together, or even live without the continuation of that mutual bliss, were to quit all title to perception, and resign every hope of future happiness. No! my charmer,

while my head retains the least spark of invention, and my heart glows with the resolution of a man, our correspondence shall not be cut off by the machinations of an envious step-mother, who never had attractions to inspire a generous passion; and now that age and wrinkles have destroyed what little share of beauty she once possessed, endeavours, like the fiend in paradise, to blast those joys in others from which she is herself eternally excluded. Doubt not, dear sovereign of my soul! that I will study, with all the eagerness of desiring love, how to frustrate her malicious intention, and renew those transporting moments, the remembrance of which now warms the breast of your ever constant

‘FATHOM.’

Had our hero murdered her father, or left her a disconsolate widow, by effecting the death of her dear husband, there might have been a possibility of her exerting the Christian virtues of resignation and forgiveness; but such a personal outrage as that contained in this epistle, precluded all hope of pardon, and rendered penitence of no signification. His atrocious crime being now fully ascertained, this virago gave a loose to her resentment, which became so loud and tempestuous, that her informer shuddered at the storm she had raised, and began to repent of having communicated the intelligence which seemed to have such a violent effect upon her brain.

She endeavoured, however, to allay the agitation, by flattering her fancy with the prospect of revenge, and gradually soothed her into a state of deliberate ire; during which she determined to take ample vengeance on the delinquent. In the zenith of her rage, she would have had immediate recourse to poison or steel, had she not been diverted from her mortal purpose by her counsellor, who represented the danger of engaging in such violent measures, and proposed a more secure scheme, in the execution of which she would see the perfidious wretch sufficiently punished, without any hazard to her own person or reputation. She advised her to inform the jeweller of Fathom's efforts to seduce her conjugal fidelity, and impart to him a plan, by which he would

would have it in his power to detect our adventurer in the very act of practising upon her virtue.

The lady relished her proposal, and actually resolved to make an assignation with Ferdinand, as usual, and gave notice of the appointment to her husband, that he might personally discover the treachery of his pretended friend, and inflict upon him such chastisement as the German's brutal disposition should suggest, when inflamed by that species of provocation. Had this project been brought to bear, Ferdinand in all likelihood would have been disqualified from engaging in any future intrigue; but Fate ordained that the design should be defeated, in order to reserve him for more important occasions.

Before the circumstances of the plan could be adjusted, it was his good fortune to meet his *dulcinea* in the street, and in the midst of their mutual condolence on the interruption they had suffered in their correspondence, he assured her, that he would never give his invention respite until he should have verified the protestations contained in the letter he had delivered to her discreet agent. This allusion to a billet she had never received, did not fail to alarm her fears, and introduce a very mortifying explanation, in which he so accurately described the person of the messenger, that she forthwith comprehended the plot, and communicated to our hero her sentiments on that subject.

Though he expressed infinite anxiety and chagrin at this misfortune, which could not fail to raise new obstacles to their love, his heart was a stranger to the uneasiness he affected; and rather pleased with the occasion, which would furnish him with pretences to withdraw himself gradually from an intercourse, by this time become equally cloying and unprofitable. Being well acquainted with the mother's temperament, he guessed the present situation of her thoughts, and concluding she would make the jeweller a party in her revenge, he resolved from that moment to discontinue his visits, and cautiously guard against any future interview with the lady, whom he had rendered so implacable.

It was well for our adventurer that his good fortune so seasonably interposed; for that same day, in the afternoon, he was favoured with a billet from the jew-

eller's wife, couched in the same tender style she had formerly used, and importing an earnest desire of seeing him next day, at the wonted rendezvous. Although his penetration was sufficient to perceive the drift of this message, or at least to discern the risk he should run in complying with her request, yet he was willing to be more fully certified of the truth of his suspicion, and wrote an answer to the billet, in which he assured her, that he would repair to the place of appointment, with all the punctuality of an impatient lover. Nevertheless, instead of performing this promise, he, in the morning, took post in a publick house opposite to the place of assignation, in order to reconnoitre the ground; and about noon had the pleasure of seeing the German, wrapped in a cloak, enter the door of his wife's friend, though the appointment was fixed at five in the evening. Fathom, blessed his good angel, for having conducted him clear of this conspiracy, and kept his station with great tranquillity, till the hour of meeting, when he beheld his enraged *Thalestris* take the same route, and enjoyed her disappointment with ineffable satisfaction.

Thus favoured with a pretext, he took his leave of her, in a letter, giving her to understand, that he was no stranger to the barbarous snare she had laid for him; and upbraiding her with having made such an ungrateful return for all his tenderness and attachment. She was not backward in conveying a reply to this expostulation, which seemed to have been dictated in all the distraction of a proud woman who sees her vengeance baffled, as well as her love disdained. Her letter was nothing but a succession of reproaches, menaces, and incoherent execrations. She taxed him with knavery, insensibility, and dissimulation; imprecated a thousand curses upon his head; and threatened not only to persecute his life with all the arts that hell and malice could inspire, but also to wound him in the person of her daughter-in-law, who should be inclosed for life in a convent, where she would have leisure to repeat of those loose and disorderly practices, which he had taught her to commit, and of which she could not pretend innocence, as they had it in their power to confront her with the evidence of her lover's own confession. Yet all this denunciation was

qualified with an alternative, by which he was given to understand, that the gates of mercy were still open, and that penitence was capable of washing out the deepest stain of guilt.

Ferdinand read the whole remonstrance with great composure and moderation, and was content to incur the hazard of her hate, rather than put her to the trouble of making such an effort of generosity, as would induce her to forgive the heinous offence he had committed; nor did his apprehension for Wilhelmina in the least influence his behaviour on this occasion: so zealous was he for her spiritual concerns, that he would have been glad to hear she had actually taken the veil; but he knew such a step was not at all agreeable to her disposition, and that no violence would be offered to her inclinations on that score, unless her step-mother should communicate to the father that letter of Fathom's which she had intercepted, and by which the German would be convinced of his daughter's backsliding; but this measure, he rightly supposed, the wife would not venture to take, lest the husband, instead of taking her advice touching the young lady, should seek to compromise the affair, by offering her in marriage to her debaucher; a proffer, which, if accepted, would overwhelm the mother with vexation and despair. He therefore chose to trust to the effects of lenient time, which he hoped would gradually weaken the resentment of this Penthesilea, and dissolve his connection with the other parts of the family, from which he longed to be totally detached.

How well soever he might have succeeded in his attempts to shake off the yoke of the mother, who, by her situation in life, was restrained from prosecuting those measures her resentment had planned against his fortitude and indifference; he would have found greater difficulty than he had foreseen, in disengaging himself from the daughter, whose affections he had won under the most solemn professions of honour and fidelity; and who, now she was debarred of his company and conversation, and in danger of losing him for ever, had actually taken the resolution of disclosing the amour to her father, that he might interpose in behalf of her peace and reputation, and secure her happiness by the sanction of the church.

CHAP. XVIII.

OUR HERO DEPARTS FROM VIENNA, AND QUITTS THE DOMAIN OF VENUS FOR THE ROUGH FIELD OF MARS.

LUCKILY for our adventurer, before he adhered to this determination, the young Count De Melville was summoned to Presburg by his father, who desired to see him, before he should take the field, in consequence of a rupture between the emperor and the French king; and Fathom of course quitted Vienna, in order to attend his patron, after he and Renaldo had resided two whole years in that capital, where the former had made himself perfect in all the polite exercises, become master of the French tongue, and learned to speak the Italian with great facility; over and above those other accomplishments in which we have represented him as an inimitable original.

As for the young count, his exterior was so much improved by the company to which he had access, since his departure from his father's house, that his parents were equally surprized and overjoyed at the alteration. All that awkwardness and rusticity which hung upon his deportment, was, like the rough coat of a diamond, polished away; the connection and disposition of his limbs, seemed to have been adjusted anew; his carriage was become easy, his air perfectly genteel, and his conversation gay and unrestrained. The merit of this reformation was in a great measure ascribed to the care and example of Mr. Fathom, who was received by the old count and his lady with marks of singular friendship and esteem; nor was he overlooked by Mademoiselle, who still remained in a state of celibacy, and seemed to have resigned all hope of altering her condition; she expressed uncommon satisfaction at the return of her old favourite, and re-admitted him into the same degree of familiarity with which he had been honoured before his departure.

The joy of Teresa was so excessive at his arrival, that she could scarce suppress her raptures, so as to conceal them from the notice of the family; and our hero, upon this occasion, performed the part of an exquisite actor, in dissembling those

those transports which his bosom never knew. So well had this pupil retained the lessons of her instructor, that in the midst of those fraudulent appropriations, which she still continued to make, she found means to support her interest and character with Mademoiselle, and even to acquire such influence in the family, that no other servant, male or female, could pretend to live under the same roof, without paying incessant homage to this artful waiting-woman, and yielding the most abject submission to her will.

The young gentleman having tarried at Presburg about six weeks, during which a small field-equipage was prepared for Renaldo, they repaired to the camp at Heilbron, under the auspices of Count Melville, in whose regiment they carried arms as volunteers, with a view to merit promotion in the service, by their own personal behaviour. Our adventurer would have willingly dispensed with this occasion of signalizing himself, his talents being much better adapted to another sphere of life; nevertheless, he affected uncommon alacrity at the prospect of gathering laurels in the field, and subscribed to his fortune with a good grace; foreseeing, that even in a campaign, a man of his art and ingenuity, might find means to consult his corporal safety, without any danger to his reputation. Accordingly, before he had lived full three weeks in camp, the damp situation and sudden change in his way of life, had such a violent effect upon his constitution, that he was deprived of the use of all his limbs; and mourned without ceasing, his hard fate, by which he found himself precluded from all opportunity of exerting his diligence, courage, and activity, in the character of a soldier, to which he now aspired.

Renaldo, who was actually enamoured of a martial life, and missed no occasion of distinguishing himself, consoled his companion, with great cordiality, encouraged him with the hope of seeing his constitution familiarized to the inconveniences of a camp, and accommodated him with every thing which he thought would alleviate the pain of his body, as well as the anxiety of his mind. The old count, who sincerely sympathized with his affliction, would have persuaded him to retire into quarters, where he could be carefully nursed,

and provided with every thing necessary to a person in his condition; but such was his desire of glory, that he resisted his patron's importunities with great constancy, till at length, seeing the old gentleman obstinately determined to consult his health, by removing him from the field, he gradually suffered himself to recover the use of his hands, made shift to sit up in his bed, and amuse himself with cards or back-gammon, and notwithstanding the feeble condition of his legs, ventured to ride out on horseback, to visit the lines; though the count and his son would never yield to his solicitations so far, as to let him accompany Renaldo in those excursions and reconnoitering parties by which a volunteer inures himself to toil and peril, and acquires that knowledge in the operations of war, which qualifies him for a command in the service.

Notwithstanding this exemption from all duty, our adventurer managed matters so as to pass for a youth of infinite mettle, and even rendered his backwardness and timidity subservient to the support of that character, by expressing an impatience of lying inactive, and a desire of signalizing his prowess, which even the disabled condition of his body could scarce restrain. He must be a man of very weak nerves and excessive irresolution, who can live in the midst of actual service, without imbibing some portion of military fortitude; danger becomes habitual, and loses a great part of its terror; and as fear is often caught by contagion, so is courage communicated among the individuals of an army. The hope of fame, desire of honours and preferment, envy, emulation, and the dread of disgrace, are motives which co-operate in suppressing that aversion to death or mutilation, which nature hath implanted in the human mind; and therefore, it is not to be wondered at, if Fathom, who was naturally chicken-hearted, gained some advantages over his disposition, before the end of the campaign, which happened to be neither perilous nor severe.

During the winter, while both armies remained in quarters, our adventurer attended his patron to Presburg; and before the troops were in motion, Renaldo obtained a commission, in consequence of which, he went into garrison at Philippsburg, whither he was followed by our hero, while the old count's duty called

called him to the field in a different place. Ferdinand for some time had no reason to be dissatisfied with this disposition, by which he was at once delivered from the fatigues of a campaign, and the inspection of a severe censor, in the person of Count Melville; and his satisfaction was still increased by an accidental meeting with the Tyroleze, who had been his confederate at Vienna, and now chanced to serve in garrison on the same footing with himself. These two knights-errant renewed their former correspondence; and, as all soldiers are addicted to gaming, levied contributions upon all those officers who had money to lose, and temerity to play.

However, they had not long pursued this branch of traffick, when their success was interrupted by a very serious occurrence, that for the present entirely detached the gentlemen in the garrison from such amusements. The French troops invested Fort Kehl, situated on the Rhine, opposite to Strasburg, and the Imperialists dreading that the next storm would fall upon Philipsburg, employed themselves with great diligence, to put that important fortress in a proper posture of defence. If the suspension of play was displeasing to our hero, the expectation of being besieged was by no means more agreeable. He knew the excellence of the French engineers, the power of their artillery, and the perseverance of their general: he felt, by anticipation, the toils of hard duty upon the works, the horrors of night-alarms, cannonading, bombardment, sallies, and mines blown up; and deliberated with himself, whether or not he should privately withdraw, and take refuge among the besiegers; but when he reflected that such a step, besides the infamy that must attend it, would be like that of running upon Scylla, seeking to avoid Charybdis, as he would be exposed to more danger and inconvenience in the trenches, than he could possibly undergo in the town, and after all run the risk of being taken and treated as a deserter; upon these considerations, he resolved to submit himself to his destiny, and endeavoured to mitigate the rigour of his fate, by those arts he had formerly practised with success. He accordingly found means to enjoy a very bad state of health during the whole siege, which lasted about six

weeks after the trenches were opened; and then the garrison marched out by capitulation, with all the honours of war.

C H A P. XIX.

HE PUTS HIMSELF UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF HIS ASSOCIATE, AND STUMBLES UPON THE FRENCH CAMP, WHERE HE FINISHES HIS MILITARY CAREER.

NOTHING else of moment was transacted during that campaign; and in the winter, our adventurer, with the young count, and his friend the Tyroleze, were disposed in quarters of cantonment, where Ferdinand made himself amends for the chagrin he had undergone, by the exercise of those talents in which he excelled. Not that he was satisfied with the sphere of life in which he acted; though he knew himself consummate in the art of play, he was not at all ambitious of a gamester's name; nor did he find himself disposed to hazard those discoveries and explanations to which heroes of that class are sometimes necessarily exposed. His aim was to dwell among the tents of civil life, undisturbed by quarrels and the din of war, and render mankind subservient to his interest, not by stratagems which irritate, but by that suppleness of insinuation, which could not fail to soothe the temper of those on whom he meant to prey.

He saw that all his expectations of Count Melville's future favour, were connected with his choice of a military life; and that his promotion in the service would, in a great measure, depend upon his personal behaviour in such emergencies as he did not at all wish to encounter. On the other hand, he confided so much in his own dexterity and address, that he never doubted of being able to rear a splendid fortune for himself, provided he could once obtain a fixed and firm foundation. He had, in fancy, often enjoyed a prospect of England, not only as his native country, to which, like a true citizen, he longed to be united; but also as the land of promise, flowing with milk and honey, and abounding with subjects on which he knew his talents would be properly exercised.

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These reflections never occurred without leaving a strong impression upon the mind of our adventurer, which influenced his deliberations in such a manner, as at length amounted to a perfect resolution of withdrawing himself privately from a service that teemed with disagreeable events, and of transporting himself into the country of his ancestors, which he considered as the Canaan of all able adventurers. But, previous to his appearance on that stage, he was desirous of visiting the metropolis of France, in which he hoped to improve himself in the knowledge of men and things, and acquire such intelligence as would qualify him to act a more important part upon the British scene. After having for some time indulged these prospects in secret, he determined to accommodate himself with the company and experience of the Tyroleze, whom, under the specious title of an associate, he knew he could convert into a very serviceable tool, in forwarding the execution of his own projects.

Accordingly, the inclination of this confederate was sounded by distant hints; and being found apt, our hero made him privy to his design of decamping without beat of drum; though, at the same time, he begged his advice, touching the method of their departure, that he might retire with as much delicacy as the nature of such a step would permit. Divers consultations were held upon this subject, before they adhered to the resolution of making their escape from the army, after it should have taken the field in the spring; because, in that case, they would have frequent opportunities of going abroad on foraging parties, and during one of these excursions, might retire in such a manner as to persuade their companions that they had fallen into the enemy's hands.

Agreeable to this determination, the camp was no sooner formed in Alsace, than our associates began to make preparations for their march, and had already taken all the previous measures for their departure, when an accident happened, which our hero did not fail to convert to his own advantage; this was no other than the desertion of Renaldo's valet, who, in consequence of a gentle chastisement, which he had richly merited, thought proper to disappear, after having plundered his master's portmanteau,

which he had forced open for the purpose. Ferdinand, who was the first person that discovered the theft, immediately comprehended the whole adventure, and taking it for granted that the delinquent would never return, resolved to finish what the fugitive had imperfectly performed.

Being favoured with the unreserved confidence of the young count, he instantly had recourse to his bureau, the locks of which he found means to burst open, and examining a private drawer, contrived with great art to conceal Renaldo's jewels and cash, made himself master of the contents without hesitation; then cutting open his cloak bag, and strewing the tent with his linen and cloaths, began to raise his voice, and produce such a clamour as alarmed the whole neighbourhood, and brought a great many officers into the tent.

He, on this, as on all other occasions, performed his cue to a miracle, expressing confusion and concern so naturally in his gestures and exclamation, that no man could possibly suspect his sincerity; nay, to such a degree of finesse did his cunning amount, that when his friend and patron entered, in consequence of an intimation he soon received of his loss, our adventurer exhibited undoubted signs of distraction and delirium; and springing upon Renaldo with all the frantick fury of a bedlamite, 'Villain!' cried he, 'restore the effects you have stole from your master, or you shall be immediately committed to the care of the prévot!' However mortified M. de Melville might be at his own misfortune, the condition of his friend seemed to touch him more nearly; he undervalued his own loss, as a trifle that could be easily repaired; said every thing which he thought would tend to soothe and compose the agitation of Ferdinand, and finally prevailed upon him to retire to rest. The calamity was wholly attributed to the deserter; and Renaldo, far from suspecting the true author, took occasion, from his behaviour on this emergency, to admire him as a mirror of integrity and attachment: in such an exquisite manner did he plan all his designs, that almost every instance of his fraud furnished matter of triumph to his reputation.

Having thus profitably exercised his genius, this subtle politician thought it high time to relinquish his military expectations;

pectations; and, securing all his valuable acquisitions about his own person, rode out with his understrapper in the midst of fifty dragoons who went in quest of forage. While the troopers were employed in making up their trusses, the two adventurers advanced towards the skirt of a wood, on pretence of reconnoitering; and the Tyroleze, who undertook to be our hero's guide, directing him to a path which leads towards Strasburg, they suddenly vanished from the eyes of their companions; who, in a few minutes, hearing the report of several pistols, which the confederates purposely fired, conjectured that they had fallen in with a party of French, by whom they were made prisoners of war.

The Tyroleze had over-rated his own knowledge when he took upon himself the charge of conducting our hero; for, upon their arrival at a certain place, where two roads crossed each other, he chanced to follow that which not only frustrated their intention, but even led them directly to the French camp: so that in the twilight they fell in upon one of the out-guards, before they were aware of their mistake. Whatever confusion and perplexity they might undergo when they heard themselves questioned by the centinel on the advanced post, certain it is, they betrayed no symptoms of fear or disorder; but, while Ferdinand endeavoured to recollect himself, his fellow-traveller, with the appearance of admirable intrepidity and presence of mind, told the soldier, that he and his companion were two gentlemen of family, who had quitted the Austrian army, on account of having sustained some ill-usage, which they had no opportunity of resenting in any other way; and that they were come to offer their services to the French general, to whose quarters they desired to be immediately conveyed.

The centinel, to whom such an instance of desertion was neither rare, nor indeed uncommon, directed them without scruple to the next post, where they found a serjeant's party, from which, at their request, they were transmitted to the officer of the grand guard, and by him, next morning, introduced to Count Coigny, who very politely received them as volunteers in the army of France. Though this translation was not at all to our hero's liking, he

was forced to acquiesce in his fate, glad to find himself, on these terms, in possession of his effects, of which he would otherwise have been infallibly rifled.

This campaign, however, was the most disagreeable period of his whole life; because the manner in which he had entered into the service, subjected him to the particular observation and notice of the French officers; so that he was obliged to be very alert in his duty, and summon all his fortitude to maintain the character he had assumed. What rendered his situation still more unpalatable, was the activity of both armies in the course of this season, during which, over and above sundry fatiguing marches and countermarches, he was personally engaged in the affair of Halch, which was very obstinate, where, being in the skirts of the detachment, he was actually wounded in the face by the sword of an hussar; but this was, luckily for him, the last time he found himself under the necessity of exerting his military prowess; for a cessation of arms was proclaimed before he was cured of his wound, and peace concluded about the end of the campaign.

During his sojourn in the French camp, he assumed the character of a man of family, who being disgusted at some supercilious treatment he had met with in the German service, and at the same time ambitious of carrying arms under the banners of France, took the opportunity of retreating by stealth from his friends, accompanied only by one with whom he could entrust his intention. In this capacity he had managed his matters to such advantage, that many French officers of rank were very well disposed to contribute their interest in his behalf, had his inclination verged towards promotion in the army; but he thought proper to conceal his real design, under the specious pretext of longing to see the metropolis of France, that centre of pleasure and politeness, in which he proposed to spend some time for the improvement of his address and understanding. These were motives too laudable to be opposed by his new patrons, some of whom furnished him with letters of recommendation to certain noblemen of the first rank at the court of Versailles, for which place he and his companion set out from the banks of the Rhine, very well satisfied with the honourable

nourable dismissal they had obtained from a life of inconvenience, danger, and alarm,

CHAP. XX.

HE PREPARES A STRATAGEM, BUT FINDS HIMSELF COUNTERMINED; PROCEEDS ON HIS JOURNEY, AND IS OVERTAKEN BY A TERRIBLE TEMPEST.

IN the course of this journey, Ferdinand, who was never deficient in his political capacity, held a secret conclave with his own thoughts, not only touching the plan of his own future conduct, but also concerning his associate, of whose fidelity and adherence he began to entertain such doubts as discouraged him from the prosecution of that design in which the Tyroleze had been at first included: for he had lately observed him practise the arts of his occupation among the French officers with such rapacity and want of caution, as indicated a dangerous temerity of temper, as well as a furious rage of acquiring, which might be some time or other satiated upon his own friends. In other words, our adventurer was afraid that his accomplice would profit by his knowledge of the road and countries through which they travelled; and, after having made free with his most valuable effects, in consequence of the familiarity subsisting between them, leave him some morning without the ceremony of a formal adieu.

Arrouzed by this suspicion, he resolved to anticipate the supposed intention of the Tyroleze, by taking his own departure in the same abrupt manner: and this scheme he actually put in execution, upon their arrival in Bar-le-duc, where it was agreed they should spend a day to repose and refresh themselves from the fatigue of hard riding. Ferdinand, therefore, taking the advantage of his companion's absence, (for the Tyroleze had walked abroad to view the town) found means to hire a peasant, who undertook to conduct him through a bye-road, as far as Chalons, and with this guide he accordingly set out on horseback, after having discharged the bill, left a blank paper sealed up in form of a letter directed to his friend, and secured behind his own saddle a pair of

leathern bags, in which his jewels and cash were usually contained. So eager was our hero to leave the Tyroleze at a considerable distance behind, that he rode all night at a round pace, without halting, and next morning found himself at a village distant thirteen good leagues from any part of the route which he and his companion had at first resolved to pursue.

Here thinking himself safely delivered from the cause of all his apprehension, he determined to lie incognito for a few days, so as that he might run no risk of an accidental meeting upon the road with the person whose company he had forsaken; and accordingly took possession of an apartment, in which he went to rest, desiring his guide to wake him when dinner should be ready. Having enjoyed a very comfortable refreshment of sleep, with his bags under his pillow, he was summoned according to his direction, and eat a very hearty meal with great tranquillity and internal satisfaction. In the afternoon he amused himself with happy presages and ideal prospects of his future fortune; and in the midst of these imaginary banquets was seized with an inclination of realizing his bliss, and regaling his eye-sight with the fruits of that success which had hitherto attended his endeavours. Thus inflamed, he opened the repository; and, O reader! what were his reflections, when in lieu of Mademoiselle Melville's ear-rings and necklace, the German's golden chain, divers jewels of considerable value, the spoils of sundry dupes, and about two hundred ducats in ready-money, he found neither more nor less than a parcel of rusty nails, disposed in such a manner as to resemble in weight and bulk the moveables he had lost.

It is not to be supposed our adventurer made this discovery without emotion. If the eternal salvation of mankind could have been purchased for the tenth part of his treasure, he would have left the whole species in a state of reprobation, rather than redeem them at that price, unless he had seen in the bargain some evident advantage to his own concerns: one may therefore easily conceive with what milkiness of resignation he bore the loss of the whole, and saw himself reduced from such affluence, to the necessity of depending upon about twenty ducats, and some

loose silver which he carried in his pocket for his expence upon the road. However bitter this pill might be in swallowing, he so far mastered his mortification as to digest it with a good grace: his own penetration at once pointed out the canal through which this misfortune had flowed upon him; he forthwith placed the calamity to the account of the Tyroleze; and never doubting that he had retired with the booty across the Rhine, into some place to which he knew Fathom would not follow his footsteps, he formed the melancholy resolution of pursuing with all dispatch his journey to Paris, that he might with all convenient expedition indemnify himself for the discomfiture he had sustained.

With regard to his confederate, his conjecture was perfectly right; that adventurer, though infinitely inferior to our hero in point of genius and invention, had manifestly the advantage of him, in the articles of age and experience; he was no stranger to Fathom's qualifications, the happy exertion of which he had often seen. He knew him to be an œconomist of the most frugal order, consequently concluded his finances were worthy of examination; and, upon the true principles of a sharper, eased him of the incumbrance, taking it for granted, that in so doing, he only precluded Ferdinand from the power of acting the same tragedy upon him, should ever opportunity concur with his inclination. He had therefore concerted his measures with the dexterity of an experienced conveyancer, and, inatching the occasion, while our hero travel-tainted, lay sunk in the arms of profound repose, he ript up the seams of the leathern depository, withdrew the contents, introduced the parcel of nails, which he had made up for the purpose, and then repaired the breach with great deliberation.

Had Fathom's good genius prompted him to examine his effects next morning, the Tyroleze, in all probability, would have maintained his acquisition by force of arms; for his personal courage was rather more determined than that of our adventurer, and he was conscious of his own ascendancy in this particular; but his good fortune prevented such explanation. Immediately after dinner, he availed himself of his knowledge, and betaking himself to a remote part of the town, set out in a post chaise

for Luneville, while our hero was meditating his own escape.

Fathom's conception was sufficient to comprehend the whole of this adventure, as soon as his chagrin would give his sagacity fair play; nor would he allow his resolution to sink under the trial; on the contrary, he departed from the village that same afternoon, under the auspices of his conductor, and found himself benighted in the midst of a forest far from the habitations of men; the darkness of the night, the silence and solitude of the place, the indistinct images of the trees that appeared on every side, 'stretching their extravagant arms 'athwart the gloom,' conspired with the dejection of spirits occasioned by his loss to disturb his fancy, and raise strange phantoms in his imagination. Although he was not naturally superstitious, his mind began to be invaded with an awful horror, that gradually prevailed over all the consolations of reason and philosophy; nor was his heart free from the terrors of assassination. In order to dissipate these disagreeable reveries, he had recourse to the conversation of his guide, by whom he was entertained with the history of divers travellers, who had been robbed and murdered by ruffians whose retreat was in the recesses of that very wood.

In the midst of this communication, which did not at all tend to the elevation of our hero's spirits, the conductor made an excuse for dropping behind, while our traveller jogged on in expectation of being joined again by him in a few minutes; he was however disappointed in that hope: the sound of the other horse's feet by degrees grew more and more faint and at last altogether died away. Alarmed at this circumstance, Fathom halted in the middle of the road, and listened with the most fearful attention; but his sense of hearing was saluted with nought but the dismal sighings of the trees, that seemed to foretel an approaching storm; accordingly, the heavens contracted a more dreary aspect, the lightning began to gleam, the thunder to roll, and the tempest raising it's voice to a tremendous roar, descended in a torrent of rain.

In this emergency, the fortitude of our hero was almost quite overcome; so many concurring circumstances of danger and distress, might have appalled the

the most undaunted breast; what impression then must they have made upon the mind of Ferdinand, who was by no means a man to set fear at defiance! indeed, he had well nigh lost the use of his reflection, and was actually invaded to the skin, before he could recollect himself so far as to quit the road, and seek for shelter among the thickets that surrounded him. Having rode some furlongs into the forest, he took his station under a tuft of tall trees, that screened him from the storm, and in that situation called a council within himself, to deliberate upon his next excursion. He persuaded himself that his guide had deserted him for the present, in order to give intelligence of a traveller, to some gang of robbers with whom he was connected; and that he must of necessity fall a prey to those banditti, unless he should have the good fortune to elude their search, and disentangle himself from the mazes of the wood.

Harrowed with these apprehensions, he resolved to commit himself to the mercy of the hurricane, as of two evils the least, and penetrate straight forwards through some devious opening, until he should be delivered from the forest. For this purpose he turned his horse's head in a line quite contrary to the direction of the high-road which he had left, on the supposition that the robbers would pursue that tract in quest of him, and that they would never dream of his deserting the highway to traverse an unknown forest, amidst the darkness of such a boisterous night. After he had continued in this progress through a succession of groves, and bogs, and, thorns, and brakes, by which not only his cloaths, but also his skin suffered in a grievous manner, while every nerve quivered with eagerness of dismay, he at length reached an open plain; and, pursuing his course, in full hope of arriving at some village where his life would be safe, he descried a rushlight at a distance, which he looked upon as the star of his good fortune; and riding towards it at full speed, arrived at the door of a lone cottage, into which he was admitted by an old woman, who, understanding he was a bewildered traveller, received him with great hospitality.

When he learned from his hostess that there was not another house within three leagues, that she could accommo-

date him with a tolerable bed, and his horse with lodging and oats, he thanked Heaven for his good fortune in stumbling upon this homely habitation, and determined to pass the night under the protection of the old cottager, who gave him to understand that her husband, who was a faggot-maker, had gone to the next town to dispose of his merchandize, and that in all probability he would not return till next morning, on account of the tempestuous night. Ferdinand sounded the beldame with a thousand artful interrogations, and she answered with such appearance of truth and simplicity, that he concluded his person was quite secure; and after having been regaled with a dish of eggs and bacon, desired she would conduct him into the chamber where she proposed he should take his repose. He was accordingly ushered up by a sort of ladder into an apartment furnished with a standing-bed, and almost half filled with trusses of straw. He seemed extremely well pleased with his lodging, which in reality exceeded his expectation; and his kind landlady cautioning him against letting the candle approach the combustibles, took her leave, and locked the door on the outside.

CHAP. XXI.

HE FALLS UPON SCYLLA, SEEKING TO AVOID CHARYBDIS.

FATHOM, whose own principles taught him to be suspicious, and ever upon his guard against the treachery of his fellow-creatures, could have dispensed with this instance of her care in confining her guest to her chamber, and began to be seized with strange fancies when he observed that there was no bolt on the inside of the door, by which he might secure himself from intrusion. In consequence of these suggestions, he proposed to take an accurate survey of every object in the apartment; and, in the course of his inquiry, had the mortification to find the dead body of a man, still warm, who had been lately stabbed, and concealed beneath several bundles of straw.

Such a discovery could not fail to fill the breast of our hero with unspeakable horror; for he concluded that he himself would undergo the same fate before

morning, without the interposition of a miracle in his favour. In the first transports of his dread, he ran to the window, with a view to escape by that outlet, and found his flight effectually obstructed by divers strong bars of iron. Then his heart began to palpitate, his hair to bristle up, and his knees to totter; his thoughts teemed with presages of death and destruction; his conscience rose up in judgment against him; and he underwent a severe paroxysm of dismay and distraction. His spirits were agitated into a state of fermentation that produced a species of resolution a-kind to that which is inspired by brandy or other strong liquors; and, by an impulse that seemed supernatural, he was immediately hurried into measures for his own preservation.

What upon a less interesting occasion his imagination durst not propose, he now executed without scruple or remorse: he undressed the corpse that lay bleeding among the straw, and conveying it to the bed in his arms, deposited it in the attitude of a person who sleeps at his ease; then he extinguished the light, took possession of the place from whence the body had been removed; and, holding a pistol ready cocked in each hand, waited for the sequel with that determined purpose which is often the immediate production of despair. About midnight he heard the sound of feet ascending the ladder, the door was softly opened, he saw the shadow of two men stalking towards the bed; a dark lanthorn being unshrouded, directed their aim to the supposed sleeper, and he that held it thrust a poignard to his heart; the force of the blow made a compression on the chest, and a sort of groan issued from the windpipe of the defunct: the stroke was repeated, without producing a repetition of the note; so that the assassins concluded the work was effectually done, and retired for the present, with a design to return and rifle the deceased at their leisure.

Never had our hero spent a moment in such agony as he felt during this operation; the whole surface of his body was covered with a cold sweat, and his nerves were relaxed with an universal palsy; in short, he remained in a trance, that, in all probability, contributed to his safety; for had he retained the use of his senses, he might have been discovered by the transports of his fear.

The first use he made of his retrieved recollection, was to perceive that the assassins had left the door open in their retreat; and he would have instantly availed himself of this their neglect, by sallying out upon them at the hazard of his life, had not he been restrained by a conversation he overheard in the room below, importing that the ruffians were going to set out upon another expedition, in hopes of finding more prey. They accordingly departed, after having laid strong injunctions upon the old woman to keep the door fast locked during their absence; and Ferdinand took his resolution without farther delay. So soon as, by his conjecture, the robbers were at a sufficient distance from the house, he rose from his lurking-place, moved softly towards the bed, and rummaging the pockets of the deceased, found a purse well stored with ducats, of which, together with a silver watch and a diamond ring, he immediately possessed himself without scruple; then descending with great care and circumspection into the lower apartment, stood before the old beldame, before she had the least intimation of his approach.

Accustomed as she was to the trade of blood, the hoary hag did not behold this apparition without giving signs of infinite terror and astonishment, believing it was no other than the spirit of her second guest who had been murdered. She fell upon her knees, and began to recommend herself to the protection of the saints, crossing herself with as much devotion as if she had been intitled to the particular care and attention of Heaven. Nor did her anxiety abate, when she was undeceived in this her supposition, and understood it was no phantom, but the real substance of the stranger; who, without staying to upbraid her with the enormity of her crimes, commanded her, on pain of immediate death, to produce his horse; to which being conducted, he set her upon the saddle without delay, and mounting behind, invested her with the management of the reins, swearing in a most peremptory tone, that the only chance she had for her life, was in directing him safely to the next town; and that so soon as she should give him the least cause to doubt her fidelity in the performance of that task, he would on the instant act the part of her executioner.

This

This declaration had its effect upon the withered Hecate; who, with many supplications for mercy and forgiveness, promised to guide him in safety to a certain village at the distance of two leagues, where he might lodge in security, and be provided with a fresh horse, or other convenience, for pursuing his intended route. On these conditions, he told her, she might deserve his clemency, and they accordingly took their departure together, she being placed astride upon the saddle, holding the bridle in one hand, and a switch in the other; and our adventurer sitting on the crupper, superintending her conduct, and keeping the muzzle of a pistol close at her ear. In this equipage, they travelled across part of the same wood in which his guide had forsaken him; and it is not to be supposed, that he passed his time in the most agreeable reverie, while he found himself involved in the labyrinth of those shades, which he considered as the haunts of robbery and assassination.

Common fear was a comfortable sensation to what he felt in this excursion. The first steps he had taken for his preservation, were the effects of mere instinct, while his faculties were extinguished or suppressed by despair: but, now as his reflection began to recur, he was haunted by the most intolerable apprehensions. Every whisper of the wind through the thickets, was swelled into the hoarse menaces of murder; the shaking of the boughs was construed into the brandishing of poignards; and every shadow of a tree, became the apparition of a ruffian eager for blood. In short, at each of these occurrences, he felt what was infinitely more tormenting than the stab of a real dagger; and, at every fresh flip of his fear, he acted as remembrancer to his conductress, in a new volley of imprecations, importing, that her life was absolutely connected with his opinion of his own safety.

Human nature could not long subsist under such complicated terror: at last he found himself clear of the forest, and was blessed with the distant view of an inhabited place: he then began to exercise his thoughts upon a new subject. He debated with himself, whether he should make a parade of his intrepidity and publick spirit, by disclosing his achievement, and surrendering

his guide to the penalty of the law; or leave the old hag and her accomplices to the remorse of their own consciences, and proceed quietly on his journey to Paris, in undisturbed possession of the prize he had already obtained. This last step he determined to take, upon recollecting that, in the course of his information, the story of the murdered stranger would infallibly attract the attention of justice, and in that case the effects he had borrowed from the defunct must be refunded for the benefit of those who had a right to the succession. This was an argument which our adventurer could not resist; he foresaw that he should be stripped of his acquisition, which he looked upon as the fair fruits of his valour and sagacity; and moreover, he detained as an evidence against the robbers, to the manifest detriment of his affairs: perhaps, too, he had motives of conscience, that dissuaded him from bearing witness against a set of people, whose principles did not much differ from his own.

Influenced by such considerations, he yielded to the first importunity of the beldame, whom he dismissed at a very small distance from the village, after he had earnestly exhorted her to quit such an atrocious course of life, and atone for her past crimes, by sacrificing her associates to the demands of justice. She did not fail to vow a perfect reformation, and to prostrate herself before him, for the favour she had found; then she betook herself to her habitation, with full purpose of advising her fellow-murderers to repair with all dispatch to the village, and impeach our hero, who wisely distrusting her professions, staid no longer in the place, than to hire a guide for the next stage, which brought him to the city of Chalons sur Marne.

CHAP. XXII.

HE ARRIVES AT PARIS, AND IS PLEASED WITH HIS RECEPTION.

HE was not so smitten with the delightful situation of this ancient town, but that he abandoned it as soon as he could procure a post-chaise, in which he arrived at Paris, without having been exposed to any other troublesome adventure upon the road. He took lodgings at a certain hotel in the Fauxbourg

Fauxbourg de St. Germain, which is the general rendezvous of all the strangers that resort to this capital; and now sincerely congratulated himself upon his happy escape from his Hungarian connections, and from the snares of the banditti, as well as upon the spoils of the dead body, and his arrival at Paris, from whence there was such a short conveyance to England, whither he was attracted by far other motives than that of filial veneration for his native soil.

He suppressed all his letters of recommendation, which he justly concluded would subject him to a tedious course of attendance upon the great, and lay him under the necessity of soliciting preferment in the army, than which nothing was farther from his inclination; and resolved to make his appearance in the character of a private gentleman, which would supply him with opportunities of examining the different scenes of life in such a gay metropolis, so as that he should be able to chuse that sphere in which he could move the most effectually to his own advantage. He accordingly hired an occasional domestick, and under the denomination of Count Fadome, which he had retained since his elopement from Renaldo, repaired to dinner at an ordinary, to which he was directed as a reputable place frequented by fashionable strangers of all nations.

He found this piece of information perfectly just; for he no sooner entered the apartment, than his ears were saluted with a strange confusion of sounds, among which he at once distinguished the high and low Dutch, barbarous French, Italian, and English languages. He was rejoiced at this occasion of displaying his own qualifications; took his place at one of three long tables, betwixt a Westphalian count and a Bolognian marquis, insinuated himself into the conversation with his usual address, and, in less than half an hour, found means to accost a native of each different country in his own mother tongue.

Such extensive knowledge did not pass unobserved. A French abbé, in a provincial dialect, complimented him upon his retaining that purity in pronunciation, which is not to be found in the speech of a Parisian. The Bolognian mistaking him for a Tuscan, 'Sir,' said he, 'I presume you are from Florence: I hope the illustrious house of Lorrain

'leaves you gentlemen of that famous city no room to regret the loss of your own princes.' The castle of Versailles becoming the subject of conversation, Monsieur Le Comte appealed to him as to a native German, whether it was not inferior in point of magnificence to the Chateau of Grubenhagen; the Dutch officer addressing himself to Fathom, drank to the prosperity of Faderland, and asked if he had not once served in garrison at Schenkenschans; and an English knight swore with great assurance, that he had frequently rambled with him at midnight, among the hundreds of Drury.

To each person he replied in a polite though mysterious manner, which did not fail to enhance their opinion of his good-breeding and importance; and long before the dessert appeared, he was by all the company supposed to be a personage of great consequence, who, for some substantial reasons, found it convenient to keep himself incognito. This being the case, it is not to be doubted that particular civilities were poured upon him from all quarters: he perceived their sentiments, and encouraged them, by behaving with that sort of complaisance which seems to be the result of engaging condescension in a character of superior dignity and station. His affability was general; but his chief attention limited to those gentlemen already mentioned, who chanced to sit nearest him at table; and he no sooner gave them to understand that he was an utter stranger in Paris, than they unanimously begged to have the honour of making him acquainted with the different curiosities peculiar to that metropolis.

He accepted of their hospitality, accompanied them to a coffee-house in the afternoon, from whence they repaired to the opera, and afterwards adjourned to a noted hotel, in order to spend the remaining part of the evening. It was here that our hero secured himself effectually in the footing he had gained in their good graces: he in a moment saw through all the characters of the party, and adapted himself to the humour of each individual; without descending from that elevation of behaviour, which he perceived would operate among them in his behalf. With the Italian he discoursed on musick, in the style of a connoisseur; and indeed had

had a better claim to that title than the generality of those upon whom it is usually conferred, for he understood the art in theory as well as in practice, and would have made no contemptible figure among the best performers of the age.

He harangued upon taste and genius to the abbé, who was a wit and critic *ex officio*, or rather *ex vestitu*; for, a young pert Frenchman, the very moment he puts on the *petit collet*, or little band, looks upon himself as an inspired son of Apollo; and every one of the fraternity thinks it incumbent upon him to assert the divinity of his mission: in a word, the abbés are a set of people, that bear a strong analogy to the templars in London. Fools of each fabrick, sharpeners of all sorts, and dunces of every degree, profess themselves of both orders. The templar is, generally speaking, a prig, so is the abbé: both are distinguished by an air of petulance and self-conceit, which holds a middle rank betwixt the insolence of a first-rate buck, and the learned pride of a supercilious pedant. The abbé is supposed to be a younger brother in quest of preferment in the church; the Temple is considered as a receptacle or seminary for younger sons intended for the bar; but a great number of each profession turn aside into other paths of life, long before they reach these proposed goals. An abbé is often metamorphosed into a foot-soldier; a templar sometimes sinks into an attorney's clerk. The galleys of France abound with abbés; and many templars may be found in our American plantations; not to mention those who have made a publick exit nearer home. Yet, I would not have it thought that my description includes every individual of these societies. Some of the greatest scholars, politicians, and wits, that ever Europe produced, have wore the habit of an abbé; and many of our most noble families in England derive their honours from those who have studied law in the Temple: the worthy sons of every community shall always be sacred from my censure and ridicule; and, while I laugh at the folly of particular members, I can still honour and revere the institution.

But let us return from this comparison, which some readers may think impertinent and unseasonable; and

observe, that the Westphalian count, Dutch officer, and English knight, were not excepted from the particular regard and attention of our adventurer. He pledged the German in every bumper; flattered the Hollander with compliments upon the industry, wealth, and policy of the Seven United Provinces; but he reserved his chief battery for his own countryman, on the supposition that he was, in all respects, the best adapted for the purposes of a needy gamester: him, therefore, he cultivated with extraordinary care and singular observance; for he soon perceived him to be an humourist, and from that circumstance derived an happy presage of his own success. The baronet's disposition seemed to be cast in the true English mould. He was sour, silent, and contemptuous; his very looks indicated a consciousness of superior wealth; and he never opened his mouth except to make some dry, sarcastick, national reflection: nor was his behaviour free from that air of suspicion which a man puts on, when he believes himself in a crowd of pickpockets, whom his caution and vigilance set at defiance. In a word, though his tongue was silent on the subject, his whole demeanour was continually saying, 'You are all a pack of poor, lousy rascals, who have a design upon my purse: 'tis true, I could buy your whole generation; but, I won't be bubbled, d'ye see! I am aware of your flattery, and upon my guard against all your knavish pranks; and I come into your company for my own amusement only.'

Fathom having reconnoitered this peculiarity of temper, instead of treating him with that assiduous complaisance, which he received from the other gentlemen of the party, kept aloof from him in the conversation, with a remarkable shyness of distant civility, and seldom took notice of what he said, except with a view to contradict him, or retort some of his satirical observations. This he conceived to be the best method of acquiring his good opinion; because the Englishman would naturally conclude he was a person who could have no sinister views upon his fortune, else he would have chosen quite a different manner of deportment. Accordingly, the knight seemed to bite at the hook: he listened to Ferdinand with uncommon regard; he

he was even heard to commend his remarks; and at length drank to their better acquaintance.

CHAP. XXIII.

ACQUITS HIMSELF WITH ADDRESS IN A NOCTURNAL RIOT.

THE Italian and the abbé were the first who began to grow whimsical under the influence of the Burgundy; and, in the heat of their elevation, proposed that the company should amuse themselves during the remaining part of the night at the house of an obliging dame, who maintained a troop of fair nymphs for the accommodation of the other sex. The proposal was approved by all, except the Hollander, whose œconomy the wine had not as yet invaded; and while he retreated soberly to his own lodgings, the rest of the society adjourned in two coaches to the temple of love, where they were received by the venerable priestess, a personage turned of seventy, who seemed to exercise the functions of her calling, in despite of the most cruel ravages of time; for age had bent her into the form of a Turkish bow; her head was agitated by the palsy, like the leaf of the poplar-tree; her hair fell down in scanty parcels, as white as the driven snow; her face was not simply wrinkled, but ploughed into innumerable furrows; her jaws could not boast of one remaining tooth; one eye distilled a large quantity of rheum, by virtue of the fiery edge that surrounded it, the other was altogether extinguished; and she had lost her nose in the course of her ministration. The Delphick sibyl was but a type of this hoary matron, who by her figure might have been mistaken for the consort of Chaos, or mother of Time. Yet there was something meritorious in her appearance, as it denoted her an indefatigable minister to the pleasure of mankind; and as it formed an agreeable contrast with the beauty and youth of the fair damsels that wantoned in her train; it resembled those discords in musick which, properly disposed, contribute to the harmony of the whole piece; or those horrible giants who, in the world of romance, used to guard the gates of the castle in which the enchanted damsel was confined.

This Urganda seemed to be aware of

her own importance, and perfectly well acquainted with the human appetite; for she compelled the whole company to undergo her embrace: then a lacquey in magnificent livery ushered them into a superb apartment, where they waited some minutes, without being favoured with the appearance of the ladies, to the manifest dissatisfaction of the abbé, who sending for the *gouvernante*, reprimanded her severely for her want of *politesse*. The old lady, who was by no means a pattern of patience and submission, retorted his reproaches with great emphasis and vivacity; her eloquence flowed altogether in the Covent Garden strain; and I question whether the celebrated Mother Douglass herself could have made such a figure in an extemporaneous altercation.

After having bestowed upon the abbé the epithets of saucy, insignificant pimp, she put him in mind of the good offices which he had received at her hands; how she had supplied him with bed, board, and bed-fellow, in his greatest necessity; sent him abroad with money in his pockets; and, in a word, cherished him in her bosom, when his own mother had abandoned him to distress: she then reviled him for presuming to affront her before strangers; and gave the company to understand, that the young ladies would wait upon them as soon as they could be confessed and receive absolution, from a worthy cordelier, who was now employed in performing that charitable office. The gentlemen were satisfied with this remonstrance, which argued the old lady's pious concern for the souls that were under her care; and our adventurer proposed an accommodation betwixt her and the abbé, who was prevailed upon to ask her pardon, and receive her blessing upon his knees.

This affair had not been long adjusted, when five damsels were introduced in a very gay dishabille, and our hero was complimented with the privilege of chusing his Amanda from the whole bevy; when he was provided, the others began to pair themselves; and unhappily the German count chanced to pitch upon the same nymph who had captivated the desires of the British knight: a dispute immediately ensued; for the Englishman made his addresses to the lady, without paying the least regard to the priority of the other's claim; and she being pleased with his attachment, did

not

not scruple to renounce his rival, who swore by the thunder, lightning, and sacrament, that he would not quit his pretensions for any prince in Christendom, much less for a little English chevalier, whom he had already honoured too much in condescending to be his companion.

The knight, provoked at this stately declaration, which was the immediate effect of anger and ebriety, eyed his antagonist with a most contemptuous aspect, and advised him to avoid such comparisons for the future: 'We all know,' said he, 'the importance of a German count; I suppose your revenue amounts to three hundred six-dollars; and you have a chateau that looks like the ruins of an English gaol. I will bind myself to lend you a thousand pounds upon a mortgage of your estate, (and a bad bargain I am sure I shall have) if I do not in less than two months find a yeoman of Kent, who spends more in strong ale than the sum total of your yearly income; and were the truth known, I believe that lace upon your coat is no better than tinsel, and those fringed ruffles with fine Holland sleeves tacked to a shirt of brown canvas; so that were you to undress yourself before the lady, you would only expose your own poverty and pride.'

The count was so much enraged at these sarcastic observations, that his faculty of speech was overwhelmed by his resentment; though, in order to acquit himself of the Englishman's imputation, he forthwith pulled off his cloaths with such fury, that his brocade waistcoat was tore from top to bottom. The knight, mistaking his meaning, considered this demeanour as a fair challenge, to try which was the better man in the exercise of boxing; and, on that supposition, began to strip in his turn, when he was undeceived by Fathom, who put the right interpretation upon the count's behaviour, and begged that the affair might be compromised. By this time the Westphalian recovered the use of his tongue, and with many threats and imprecations, desired they would take notice how falsely he had been aspersed, and do him justice in espousing his claim to the damsel in question.

Before the company had time or inclination to interest themselves in the

quarrel, his opponent observed, that no person who was not a mere German would ever dream of forcing the inclinations of a pretty girl, whom the accidents of fortune had subjected to his power: that such compulsion was equivalent to the most cruel rape that could be committed; and that the lady's aversion was not at all surprizing; for, to speak his own sentiments, were he a woman of pleasure, he would as soon grant favours to a Westphalian hog, as to the person of his antagonist. The German, enraged at this comparison, was quite abandoned by his patience and discretion: he called the knight an English clown, and swearing he was the most untoward beast of a whole nation of mules, snatched up one of the candlesticks, which he launched at him with such force and violence, that it sung through the air, and winging it's flight into the anti-chamber, encountered the skull of his own valet, who with immediate prostration received the message of his master.

The knight, that he might not be behind-hand with the Westphalian in point of courtesy, returned the compliment with the remaining chandelier, which also missed it's mark, and smiting a large mirror that was fixed behind them, emitted such a crash as one might expect to hear if a mine was sprung beneath a manufacture of glass. Both lights being thus extinguished, a furious combat ensued in the dark; the Italian scampered off with infinite agility, and as he went down stairs, desired that nobody would interpose, because it was an affair of honour, which could not be made up. The ladies consulted their safety in flight; Count Fathom slyly retired to one corner of the room; while the abbé, having upon him the terrors of the commissaire, endeavoured to appease and part the combatants; and in the attempt sustained a random blow upon his nose, which sent him howling into the other chamber, where finding his hand besmeared with his own blood, he began to caper about the apartment in a transport of rage and vexation.

Meanwhile, the old gentlewoman being alarmed with the noise of the battle, and apprehensive that it would end in murder, to the danger and discredit of herself and family, immediately mulctured up her myrmidons, of whom she always retained a formidable band, and

putting herself at their head, lighted them to the scene of uproar: Ferdinand, who had hitherto observed a strict neutrality, no sooner perceived them approach, than he leaped in between the disputants, that he might be found acting in the character of a peace-maker; and, indeed, by this time victory had declared for the baronet, who had treated his antagonist with a cross-buttock, which laid him almost breathless on the floor. The victor was prevailed upon, by the intreaties of Fathom, to quit the field of battle, and adjourn into another room, where in less than half an hour he received a billet from the count, defying him to single combat on the frontiers of Flanders, at an appointed time and place. The challenge was immediately accepted by the knight; who, being flushed with conquest, treated his adversary with great contempt.

But next day, when the fumes of the Burgundy were quite exhaled, and the adventure recurred to his remembrance and sober reflection, he waited upon our adventurer at his lodgings, and solicited his advice in such a manner, as gave him to understand that he looked upon what had happened as a drunken brawl, which ought to have no serious consequences. Fathom, foreseeing that the affair might be managed for his own interest, professed himself of the baronet's opinion; and without hesitation undertook the office of a mediator, assuring his principal, that his honour should suffer no stain in the course of his negotiation.

Having received the Englishman's acknowledgments for this instance of friendship, he forthwith set out for the place of the German's habitation, and understanding he was still asleep, insisted upon his being immediately waked and told, that a gentleman from the chevalier desired to see him upon business of importance, which could not be delayed. Accordingly, his valet de chambre, pressed by Fathom's importunities and remonstrances, ventured to go in and shake the count by the shoulder; when this furious Teutonian, still agitated by the fever of the preceding night, leaped out of bed in a frenzy, and seizing his sword that lay upon a table, would have severely punished the presumption of his servant, had not he been restrained by the entrance of Ferdinand, who, with a peremptory coun-

tenance, gave him to understand that the valet had acted at his immediate instigation; and that he was come, as the Englishman's friend, to concert with him proper measures for keeping the appointment they had made at their last meeting.

This message effectually calmed the German, who was not a little mortified to find himself so disagreeably disturbed. He could not help curling the impatience of his antagonist, and even hinting, that he would have acted more like a gentleman and good Christian, in expressing a desire of seeing the affair accommodated, as he knew himself to be the aggressor, consequently the first offender against the laws of politeness and good fellowship. Fathom finding him in a fit temper of mind, took the opportunity of assenting to the reasonableness of his observation: he ventured to condemn the impetuosity of the baronet; who, he perceived, was extremely nice and scrupulous in the punctilios of honour; and said it was pity that two gentlemen should forfeit each other's friendship, much less expose their lives, for such a frivolous cause. 'My dear count,' cried the Westphalian, 'I am charmed to find your sentiments so conformable to my own: in an honourable cause I despise all danger; my courage, thank Heaven! has been manifested in many publick engagements, as well as in private rencounters; but to break with my friend, whose eminent virtues I admire, and even to seek his life on such a scandalous occasion, for a little insignificant whore, who, I suppose, took the advantage of our intoxication to foment the quarrel: by Heaven, my conscience cannot digest it!'

Having expressed himself to this purpose, he waited impatiently for the reply of Ferdinand; who, after a pause of deliberation, offered his services in the way of mediation; though, he observed, it was a matter of great delicacy, and the event altogether uncertain. 'Nevertheless,' added our adventurer, 'I will strive to appease the knight; who I hope will be induced by my remonstrances to forget the unlucky accident which hath so disagreeably interrupted your mutual friendship.' The German thanked him for this proof of his regard, which yielded him more satisfaction on account of the chevalier than

than of himself: 'For by the tombs of my fathers!' cried he, 'I have so little concern for my personal safety, that if my honour were interested, I durst oppose myself singly to the whole ban of the empire; and I am now ready, if the chevalier requires it, to give him the rendezvous in the forest of Senlis, either on horseback or on foot, where this contest may be terminated with the life of one or both of us.'

Count Fathom, with a view to chastise the Westphalian for this rhodomontade; told him with a mortifying air of indifference, that if they were both bent upon taking the field, he would save himself the trouble of interposing farther in the affair; and desired to know the hour at which it would suit him to take the air with the baronet: the other, not a little embarrassed by this question, said, with a faltering tongue, he should be proud to obey the chevalier's orders; but at the same time owned he should be much better pleased if our hero would execute the pacifick proposal he had made. Fathom accordingly promised to exert himself for that purpose, and returned to the knight, with whom he assumed the merit of having tranquilized the rage of an incensed barbarian, who was now disposed to a reconciliation upon equal terms: the baronet overwhelmed him with caresses and compliments upon his friendship and address; the parties met that same forenoon, as if by accident, in Fathom's apartment, where they embraced each other cordially, exchanged apologies, and renewed their former correspondence.

Our adventurer thought he had good reason to congratulate himself upon the part he acted in this pacification: he was treated by both with signal marks of particular affection and esteem. The count pressed him to accept, as a token of his attachment, a sword of very curious workmanship, which he had received in a present from a certain prince of the empire: the knight forced upon his finger a very splendid diamond ring, as a testimony of his gratitude and esteem: but there was still another person to be appeased, before the peace of the whole company could be established; this was no other than the abbé, from whom each of the reconciled friends received at dinner a billet couched in these words.

'I Have the honour to lament the infinite chagrin and mortification that compels me to address myself in this manner to a person of your rank and eminence, whom I should do myself the pleasure of waiting upon in person, were I not prevented by the misfortune of my nose, which was last night most cruelly disarranged, by a violent contusion I had the honour to receive, in attempting to compose that unhappy *fracas* at the house of Madam La Maquerelle; and what puts the finishing stroke to my mishap is, my being rendered incapable of keeping three or four assignations with ladies of fashion, by whom I have the honour to be particularly esteemed. The disfiguration of my nose, the pain I have undergone, with the discomposure of brain which it produced, I could bear as a philosopher; but the disappointment of the ladies my glory will not permit me to overlook: and, as you know the injury was sustained in your service, I have the pleasure to hope you will not refuse to grant such reparation as will be acceptable to a gentleman who has the honour to be, with inviolable attachment, Sir, your most devoted slave,

'PEPIN CLOTHAIRE CHARLE
'HENRI LOUIS BARNABÉ
'DE FUMIER.'

This epistle was so equivocal, that the persons to whom it was addressed, did not know whether or not they ought to interpret the contents into a challenge; when our hero observed, that the ambiguity of his expressions plainly proved there was a door left open for accommodation; and proposed that they should forthwith visit the writer at his own apartment: they accordingly followed his advice, and found the abbé in his morning-gown and slippers, with three huge night-caps on his head, and a crape hat-band tied over the middle of his face, by way of bandage to his nose. He received his visitors with the most ridiculous solemnity, being still a stranger to the purport of their errand; but soon as the Westphalian declared they were come in consequence of his billet, in order to ask pardon for the undesigned offence they had given, his

I. 2. features

features retrieved their natural vivacity, and he professed himself perfectly satisfied with their polite acknowledgment. Then they consoled him upon the evil plight of his nose; and seeing some marks upon his shirt, asked with seeming concern, if he had lost any blood in the affray. To this interrogation he replied, that he had still a sufficient quantity left for the occasions of his friends; and that he should deem it his greatest glory to expend the last drop of it in their service.

Matters being thus amicably adjusted, they prevailed upon him to uncase his nose, which retained no signs of the outrage he had suffered; and the amusements of the day were concerted. It was in consequence of this plan, that after the comedy they were entertained at the count's lodgings, where quadrille was proposed by the abbé, as the most innocent pastime, and the proposal was immediately embraced by all present; and by none with more alacrity than by our adventurer, who without putting forth a moiety of his terror, went home with twenty louis clear gain; though far from believing himself greatly superior to the rest of the party in the artifices of play, he justly suspected that they had concealed their skill, with a view of stripping him on some other occasion; for he could not suppose that persons of their figure and character, should be, in reality, such novices as they affected to appear.

CHAP. XXIV.

HE OVERLOOKS THE ADVANCES OF
HIS FRIENDS, AND SMARTS SEVERELY
FOR HIS NEGLECT.

STEELED with this cautious maxim, he guarded himself from their united endeavours, in sundry subsequent attacks, by which his first conjecture was confirmed, and still came off conqueror, by virtue of his unparalleled finesse and discretion: till at length they seemed to despair of making him their prey, and the count began to drop some hints, importing a desire of seeing him more closely united to the views and interest of their triumvirate. But Ferdinand, who was altogether selfish, and quite solitary in his prospects, discouraged all those advances, being resolved

to trade upon his own bottom only, and to avoid all such connections with any person or society whatever; much more with a set of raw adventurers, whose talents he despised. With these sentiments, he still maintained the dignity and reserve of his first appearance among them, and rather increased than diminished that idea of importance which he had inspired at the beginning; because, besides his other qualifications, they gave him credit for the address with which he kept himself superior to their united designs.

While he thus enjoyed his pre-eminence, together with the fruits of his success at play, which he managed so discreetly as never to incur the reputation of an adventurer; he one day chanced to be at the ordinary, when the company was surprized by the entrance of such a figure as had never appeared before in that place. This was no other than a person habited in the exact uniform of an English jockey. His leathern cap, cut bob, fustian frock, flannel waistcoat, buff breeches, hunting-boots and whip, were sufficient of themselves to furnish out a phenomenon for the admiration of all Paris: but these peculiarities were rendered still more conspicuous by the behaviour of the man who owned them. When he crossed the threshold of the outward door, he produced such a sound from the smack of his whip, as equalled the explosion of an ordinary cohorn; and then broke forth into the halloo of a fox-hunter, which he uttered with all its variations, in a strain of vociferation that seemed to astonish and confound the whole assembly, to whom he introduced himself and his spaniel, by exclaiming, in a tone something less melodious than the cry of mackarel or live cod: 'By your leave, gentlefolks! I hope there's no offence in an honest plain Englishman's coming with money in his pocket to taste a bit of your Vrench frigafée and ragooze.'

This declaration was made in such a wild, fantastical manner, that the greatest part of the company mistook him for some savage monster or maniac, and consulted their safety by starting up from table, and drawing their swords. The Englishman seeing such a martial apparatus produced against him, recoiled two or three steps, saying, 'Waunds! a believe the people are all bewitched! What do

'do they take me for a beast of prey? Is there nobody here that knows Sir Stentor Stile, or can speak to me in my own lingo?' He had no sooner pronounced these words, than the baronet, with marks of infinite surprize, ran towards him, crying, 'Good Heaven! Sir Stentor! who expected to meet with you in Paris?' Upon which, the other eyeing him very earnestly, 'Odds heartlikens!' cried he, 'my neighbour Sir Giles Squirrel, as I am a living soul!' With these words, he flew upon him like a tiger, kissed him from ear to ear, demolished his periwig, and disordered the whole æconomy of his dress, to the no small entertainment of the company.

Having well nigh stifled his countryman with embraces, and besmeared himself with pulville from head to foot, he proceeded in this manner: 'Mercy upon thee, knight! thou art so transfigured, and bedaubed, and bedizened, that thou mought rob thy own mother without fear of information! Look ye here now, I will be trussed, if the very bitch that was brought up in thy own bosom, knows thee again!—Hey, Sweetlips! here, hussy; damn thee, tuoad, do'st n't know thy old measter? Ey, ey, thou may'st smell till Christmas: I'll be bound to be hanged, knight, if the creature's nose an't foundered by the damned stinking perfumes you have got among you.'

These compliments being past, the two knights sat down by one another; and Sir Stentor being asked by his neighbour, upon what errand he had crossed the sea, gave him to understand, that he had come to France, in consequence of a wager with Squire Snaffle, who had laid a thousand pounds, that he, Sir Stentor, would not travel to Paris by himself, and for a whole month appear every day at a certain hour in the publick walks, without wearing any other dress than that in which he saw him. 'The fellow has got no more stuff in his pate,' continued this polite stranger, 'than a jack-ass, to think I could not find my way hither, tho' I could not jabber your French lingo. Ecod! the people of this country are sharp enough to find out your meaning when you want to spend any thing among them: and as for the matter of dress, bodlikins! for a thousand

pounds I would engage to live in the midst of them, and shew myself without any cloaths at all. Odd's heart! a true-born Englishman needs not to be afeard to shew his face, nor his backside neither, with the best Frenchman that ever trod the ground. Tho' we Englishmen don't beplaster our doublets with gold and silver, I believe as how we have our pockets better lined than most of our neighbours, and for all my bit of a fustian frock, that cost me in all but forty shillings, I believe, between you and me, knight, I have more dust in my fob, than all these powdered sparks put together. But the worst of the matter is this; here is no solid belly-timber in this country: one can't have a slice of a delicate sirloin, or nice buttock of beef, for love or money. Apize upon them! I could get no eatables upon the ruoad, but what they call *bully*, which looks like the flesh of Pharaoh's lean kine stewed into rags and tatters; and then their peajohn, peajohn! rabber them, one would think every old woman of this kingdom hatched pigeons from her own body!'

It is not to be supposed that such an original sat unobserved. The French and other foreigners, who had never been in England, were struck dumb with amazement at the knight's appearance and deportment; while the English guests were overwhelmed with shame and confusion, and kept a most wary silence, for fear of being recognized by their countryman. As for our adventurer, he was inwardly transported with joy at sight of this curiosity. He considered him as a genuine, rich country booby, of the right English growth, fresh as imported; and his heart throbbed with rapture when he heard Sir Stentor value himself upon the lining of his pockets: he foresaw, indeed, that the other knight would endeavour to reserve him for his own game; but he was too conscious of his own accomplishments to think he should find great difficulty in superceding the influence of Sir Giles.

Mean while, the new-comer was, by his friend, helped to some ragout, which pleased his palate so well, that he declared he should now make a hearty meal, for the first time since he had crossed the water; and while his good-humour prevailed, he drank to every individual

individual around the table. Ferdinand seized this opportunity of insinuating himself into his favour, by saying in English, he was glad to find there was any thing in France that was agreeable to Sir Stentor. To this compliment the knight replied, with an air of surprize: 'Waunds! I find here's another countryman of mine, in this here company. Sir, I am proud to see you with all my heart.' So speaking, he thrust out his right-hand across the table, and shook our hero by the fist, with such violence of civility, as proved very grievous to a French marquis; who, in helping himself to soup, was jostled in such a manner, as to overturn the dividing spoon in his own bosom. The Englishman seeing the mischief he had produced, cried, 'No offence, I hope!' in a tone of vociferation, which the marquis in all probability misconstrued: for he began to model his features into a very sublime and peremptory look; when Fathom interpreted the apology, and at the same time informed Sir Stentor, that although he himself had not the honour of being an Englishman, he had always entertained a most particular veneration for the country, and learned the language in consequence of that esteem.

'Blood!' answered the knight, 'I think myself the more obliged to you for your kind opinion, than if you was my countryman in good earnest: for there be abundance of we English, (no offence, Sir Giles!) that seem to be ashamed of their own nation, and leave their homes to come and spend their fortunes abroad, among a parcel of—you understand me, Sir—a word to the wife, as the saying is—' Here he was interrupted by an article of the second course, that seemed to give him great disturbance: this was a roasted leveret very strong of the fumet, which happened to be placed directly under his nose. His sense of smelling was no sooner encountered by the effluvia of this delicious fare, than he started up from table, exclaiming, 'Odds, my liver! here's a piece of carrion, that I would not offer to e'er a hound in my kennel; 'tis enough to make any Christian vomit both gut and gall.' And, indeed, by the wry faces he made while he ran to the door, his stomach seemed ready to justify this last assertion.

The abbé, who concluded from these symptoms of disgust, that the leveret was not sufficiently stale, began to exhibit marks of discontent, and desired that it might be brought to the other end of the table for his examination. He accordingly hung over it with the most greedy appetite, feasting his nostrils with the steams of animal putrefaction; and at length declared that the morceau was passable, though he owned it would have been highly perfect had it been kept another week. Nevertheless, mouths were not wanting to discuss it, insipid as it was; for in three minutes there was not a vestige to be seen of that which had offended the organs of Sir Stentor, who now resumed his place, and did justice to the dessert. But what he seemed to relish better than any other part of the entertainment, was the conversation of our adventurer; whom, after dinner, he begged to have the honour of treating with a dish of coffee; to the seeming mortification of his brother knight, over which Fathom exulted in his own heart.

In short, our hero, by his affability and engaging deportment, immediately gained possession of Sir Stentor's good graces; insomuch, that he desired to crack a bottle with him in the evening, and they repaired to an auberge, whether his fellow-knight accompanied them, not without manifest signs of reluctance. There the stranger gave a loose to jollity; though at first he damned the Burgundy as a poor, thin liquor, that ran through him in a twinkling, and instead of warming, cooled his heart and bowels: however, it insensibly seemed to give the lye to his imputation; for his spirits rose to a more elevated pitch of mirth and good fellowship; he sung, or rather roared, the Early Horn, so as to alarm the whole neighbourhood, and began to flabber his companions, with a most bear-like affection. Yet, whatever haste he made to the goal of ebriety, he was distanced by his brother baronet; who, from the beginning of the party, had made little other use of his mouth, than to receive the glass, and now sunk down upon the floor, in a state of temporary annihilation.

He was immediately carried to bed by the direction of Ferdinand; who now saw himself in a manner possessor of that mine, to which he had made such eager

eager and artful advances. That he might, therefore, carry on the approaches in the same cautious manner, he gradually shook off the trammels of sobriety, gave a loose to that spirit of freedom, which good liquor commonly inspires, and in the familiarity of drunkenness, owned himself head of a noble family of Poland, from which he had been obliged to absent himself on account of an affair of honour, not yet compromised.

Having made this confession, and laid strong injunctions of secrecy upon Sir Stentor, his countenance seemed to acquire from every succeeding glass a new symptom of intoxication: they renewed their embraces, swore eternal friendship from that day, and swallowed fresh bumpers, till both being in all appearance quite overpowered, they began to yawn in concert, and even nod in their chairs. The knight seemed to resent the attacks of slumber, as so many impertinent attempts to interrupt their entertainment; he cursed his own propensity to sleep, imputing it to the damned French climate, and proposed to engage in some pastime that would keep them awake. 'Odds flesh!' cried the Briton, 'when I'm at home, I defy all the devils in hell to fatten my eyelids together, if so be as I am otherwise inclined. For there's mother, and sister Nan, and brother Numps, and I, continue to divert ourselves at all-fours, brag, cribbage, tetotum, hussle-cap, and chuck-varthing; and tho' I say it, that should n't say it, I won't turn my back to e'er a he in England, at any of these pastimes: and so, count, if you are so disposed, I am your man, (that is, in the way of friendship) at which of these you shall please to pitch upon.'

To this proposal Fathom replied, he was quite ignorant of all the games he had mentioned; but, in order to amuse Sir Stentor, he would play with him at lansquenet, for a trifle, as he had laid it down for a maxim, to risk nothing considerable at play. 'Waunds!' answered the knight, 'I hope you don't think I come here in quest of money. Thank God! I have a good landed estate worth five thousand a year, and owe no man a halfpenny; and I question whether there be many counts in your nation, (no offence, I hope!) that can say a bolder word.'

'As for your lambskin-net, I know nothing of the matter: but I will toss up with you for a guinea, cross or pile, as the saying is; or if there is such a thing in this country as a box and dice, I love to hear the bones rattle sometimes.'

Fathom found some difficulty in concealing his joy, at the mention of this last amusement, which had been one of his chief studies, and in which he had made such progress, that he could calculate all the chances with the utmost exactness and certainty. However, he made shift to contain himself within due bounds, and with seeming indifference, consented to pass away an hour at hazard, provided the implements could be procured. Accordingly, the landlord was consulted, and their desire gratified; the dice were produced, and the table resounded with the effects of their mutual eagerness. Fortune, at first, declared for the Englishman, who was permitted by our adventurer to win twenty broad pieces; and he was so elated with his success, as to accompany every lucky throw with a loud burst of laughter, and other savage and simple manifestations of excessive joy, exclaiming in a tone something less sweet than the bellowing of a bull, 'Now for the main, count: odd! here they come; here are the seven black stars, I faith. Come along my yellow boys. Odds heart! I never liked the face of Louis before.'

Fathom drew happy presages from these boyish raptures; and after having indulged them for some time, began to avail himself of his arithmetick, in consequence of which the knight was obliged to refund the greatest part of his winning: then he altered his note, and became as intemperate in his chagrin, as he had been before immoderate in his mirth. He cursed himself and his whole generation, damned his bad luck, stamped with his feet upon the floor, and challenged Ferdinand to double stakes. This was a very welcome proposal to our hero, who found Sir Stentor, just such a subject as he had long desired to encounter with; the more the Englishman laid, the more he lost; and Fathom took care to inflame his passions, by certain well-timed sarcasms upon his want of judgment, till at length he became quite outrageous, swore the dice were false, and threw

threw them out at the window; pulled off his perriwig, and committed it to the flames; spoke with the most rancorous contempt of his adversary's skill, insisting upon his having stripped many a better man, for all he was a count, and threatening that before they parted, he should not only look like a Pole, but also smell like a pole-cat.

This was a spirit which our adventurer industriously kept up, observing that the English were dupes to all the world; and that in point of genius and address, they were no more than noisy braggadocios. In short, another pair of dice was procured; the stakes were again raised, and after several vicissitudes, fortune declared so much in favour of the knight, that Fathom lost all the money in his pocket, amounting to a pretty considerable sum. By this time, he was warmed into uncommon eagerness and impatience; being equally piqued at the success and provoking exultations of his antagonist, whom he now invited to his lodgings, in order to decide the contest. Sir Stentor complied with his request; the dispute was renewed with various success, till towards day-light, Ferdinand saw this noisy, raw, unexperienced simpleton, carry off all his ready-cash, together with his jewels, and almost every thing that was valuable about his person; and, to crown the whole, the victor at parting, told him with a most intolerable sneer, that so soon as the count should receive another remittance from Poland, he would give him his revenge.

C H A P. XXV.

HE BEARS HIS FATE LIKE A PHILOSOPHER, AND CONTRACTS ACQUAINTANCE WITH A VERY REMARKABLE PERSONAGE.

THIS was a proper subject for our hero to moralize upon; and accordingly, it did not pass without his remarks; he found himself fairly foiled at his own weapons, reduced to indigence in a foreign land; and, what he chiefly regretted, robbed of all those gay expectations he had indulged from his own supposed excellence in the wiles of fraud: for, upon a little recollection, he plainly perceived he had fallen a sacrifice to the confederacy he had refused

to join; and did not at all doubt that the dice were loaded for his destruction. But instead of beating his head against the wall, tearing his hair, imprecating vain curses upon himself, or betraying other frantick symptoms of despair, he resolved to accommodate himself to his fate, and profit by the lesson he had so dearly bought.

With this intention, he immediately dismissed his valet, quitted his lodgings, retired to an obscure street on the other side of the river, and covering one eye with a large patch of black silk, presented himself in quality of a musician, to the director of the opera; who, upon hearing a trial of his skill, received him into the band without farther question. While he continued in this situation, he not only improved his taste and execution in musick, but likewise found frequent opportunities to extend his knowledge of mankind; for, besides the employment he exercised in publick, he was often concerned in private concerts that were given in the hotels of noblemen; by which means he became more and more acquainted with the persons, manners, and characters of high life, which he contemplated with the most industrious attention, as a spectator, who being altogether unconcerned in the performance, is at more liberty to observe and enjoy the particulars of the entertainment.

It was in one of those assemblies he had the pleasure of seeing his friend Sir Stentor, dressed in the most fashionable manner, and behaving with all the overstrained politesse of a native Frenchman; he was accompanied by his brother knight and the abbé; and this triumvirate, even in Fathom's hearing, gave a most ludicrous detail of the finess they had practised upon the Polish count, to their entertainer, who was ambassador from a certain court, and made himself extremely merry with the particulars of the relation. Indeed, they made shift to describe some of the circumstances in such a ridiculous light, that our adventurer himself, smarting as he was with the disgrace, could not help laughing in secret at the account. He afterwards made it his business to enquire into the characters of the two British knights; and understood they were notorious sharpers, who had come abroad for the good of their country, and now hunted in couple among a
French

French pack that dispersed themselves through the publick ordinaries, walks, and spectacles, in order to make a prey of incautious strangers.

The pride of Ferdinand was piqued at this information; and he was even animated with the desire of making reprisals upon this fraternity, from which he ardently longed to retrieve his honour and effects: but the issue of his last adventure had reinforced his caution; and for the present, he found means to suppress the dictates of his avarice and ambition; resolving to employ his whole penetration in reconnoitring the ground, before he should venture to take the field again. He therefore continued to act the part of a one-eyed fidler, under the name of Fadini, and lived with incredible frugality, that he might save a purse for his future operations. In this manner had he proceeded for the space of ten months, during which he acquired a competent knowledge of the city of Paris, when his curiosity was attracted by certain peculiarities in the appearance of a man who lived in one of the upper apartments belonging to the house in which he himself had fixed his habitation.

This was a tall, thin, meagre figure, with a long black beard, an aquiline nose, a brown complexion, and a most piercing vivacity in his eyes: he seemed to be about the age of fifty, wore the Persian habit, and there was a remarkable severity in his aspect and demeanour. He and our adventurer had been fellow-lodgers for some time; and, according to the laudable custom of these days, had hitherto remained as much estranged to one another, as if they had lived on opposite sides of the globe; but of late, the Persian seemed to regard our hero with particular attention; when they chanced to meet on the stair-case or elsewhere, he bowed to Ferdinand with great solemnity, and complimented him with the *pas*: he even proceeded in the course of this communication to open his mouth, and salute him with a good-morrow, and sometimes made the common remarks upon the weather. Fathom, who was naturally complaisant, did not discourage these advances: on the contrary, he behaved to him with marks of particular respect; and one day desired the favour of his company to breakfast.

This invitation the stranger declined

with due acknowledgment, on pretence of being out of order; and in the mean time our adventurer bethought himself of questioning the landlord concerning his outlandish guest. His curiosity was rather inflamed than satisfied with the information he could obtain from this quarter; for all he learned was, that the Persian went by the name of Ali Beker; and that he had lived in the house for the space of four months, in a most solitary and parsimonious manner, without being visited by one living soul; that, for some time after his arrival, he had been often heard to groan dismally in the night, and even to exclaim in an unknown language, as if he had laboured under some grievous affliction; and though the first transports of his grief had subsided, it was easy to perceive he still indulged a deep-rooted melancholy, for the tears were frequently observed to trickle down his beard. The commissaire of the quarter had at first ordered this Oriental to be watched in his out-goings, according to the maxims of the French police; but his life was found so regular and inoffensive, that this precaution was soon set aside.

Any man of humane sentiments, from the knowledge of these particulars, would have been prompted to offer his services to the forlorn stranger; but as our hero was devoid of all these infirmities of human nature, it was necessary that other motives should produce the same effect: his curiosity, therefore, joined with the hopes of converting the confidence of Ali to his own emolument, effectually impelled him towards his acquaintance; and in a little time they began to relish the conversation of each other; for, as the reader may have already observed, Fathom possessed all the arts of insinuation; and had discernment enough to perceive an air of dignity in the Persian, which the humility of his circumstances could not conceal. He was, moreover, a man of good understanding, not without a tincture of letters; perfectly well-bred, though in a ceremonious style; extremely moral in his discourse, and scrupulously nice in his notions of honour.

Our hero conformed himself in all respects to the other's opinion, and managed his discretion so as to pass upon him for a gentleman reduced by misfortunes to the exercise of an employment which

which was altogether unsuitable to his birth and quality. He made earnest and repeated tenders of his good offices to the stranger, and pressed him to make use of his purse with such cordial perseverance, that at length Ali's reserve was overcome, and he condescended to borrow of him a small sum, which in all probability saved his life; for he had been driven to the utmost extremity of want before he would accept of this assistance.

Fathom, having gradually stole into his good graces, began to take notice of many piteous sighs that escaped him in the moments of their intercourse, and seemed to denote an heart fraught with woe; and, on pretence of administering consolation and counsel, begged leave to know the cause of his distress; observing, that his mind would be disburdened by such communication, and perhaps his grief alleviated by some means which they might jointly concert and execute in his behalf.

Ali, thus solicited, would often shake his head with marks of extreme sorrow and despondence, and while the tears gushed from his eyes, declared that his distress was beyond the power of any remedy but death, and that by making our hero his confidant, he should only extend his unhappiness to a friend, without feeling the least remission of his own torture. Notwithstanding these repeated declarations, Ferdinand, who was well enough acquainted with the mind of man to know that such importunity is seldom or never disagreeable, redoubled his instances, together with his expressions of sympathy and esteem, until the stranger was prevailed upon to gratify his curiosity and benevolence. Having, therefore, secured the chamber-door one night, while all the rest of the family were asleep, the unfortunate Ali disclosed himself in these words.

C H A P. XXVI.

THE HISTORY OF THE NOBLE CASTILIAN.

I Should be ungrateful, as well as unwise, did I longer resist the desire you express to know the particulars of that destiny which hath driven me to this miserable disguise, and rendered me in all considerations the

most wretched of men. I have felt your friendship, am confident of your honour, and though my misfortunes are such as can never be repaired, because I am utterly cut off from hope, which is the wretch's last comfort, yet I may by your means be enabled to bear them with some degree of fortitude and resignation.

Know, then, my name is not Hali; neither am I of Persian extraction. I had once the honour to own myself a Castilian, and was, under the appellation of Don Diego De Zelos, respected as the head of one of the most ancient families of that kingdom. Judge, then, how severe that distress must be, which compels a Spaniard to renounce his country, his honours, and his name! My youth was not spent in inglorious ease; neither did it waste unheeded in the rolls of fame. Before I had attained the age of nineteen, I was twice wounded in battle; I once fortunately recovered the standard of the regiment to which I belonged, after it had been seized by the enemy; and at another occasion made shift to save the life of my colonel when he lay at the mercy of an enraged barbarian.

He that thinks I recapitulate these particulars out of ostentation, does wrong to the unhappy Don Diego De Zelos, who, in having performed these little acts of gallantry, thinks he has done nothing but simply approved himself worthy of being called a Castilian. I mean only to do justice to my own character, and to make you acquainted with one of the most remarkable incidents of my life. It was my fate, during my third campaign, to command a troop of horse in the regiment of Don Gonzales Orgulla, between whom and my father a family feud had long been maintained with great enmity; and that gentleman did not leave me without reason to believe he rejoiced at the opportunity of exercising his resentment upon his adversary's son; for he withheld from me that countenance which my fellow-officers enjoyed, and found means to subject me to divers mortifications, of which I was not at liberty to complain. These I bore in silence for some time, as part of my probation in the character of a soldier: resolved, nevertheless,

‘theless, to employ my interest at court
‘for a removal into another corps, and
‘to take some future opportunity of ex-
‘plaining my sentiments to Don Gon-
‘zales, upon the injustice of his beha-
‘viour.

‘While I animated myself with these
‘sentiments, against the discouragement
‘I underwent, and the hard duty
‘to which I was daily exposed, it
‘was our fate to be concerned in the
‘battle of Saragossa, where our regi-
‘ment was so severely handled by the
‘English infantry, that it was forced
‘to give ground, with the loss of one
‘half of its officers and men. Don
‘Gonzales, who acted as brigadier in
‘another wing, being informed of our
‘fate, and dreading the disgrace of his
‘corps, which had never turned back
‘to the enemy, put spurs to his horse,
‘and riding across the field at full
‘speed, rallied our broken squadrons,
‘and led us back to the charge with
‘such intrepidity of behaviour, as did
‘not fail to inspire us all with uncommon
‘courage and alacrity: for my
‘own part, I thought myself doubly
‘interested to distinguish my valour;
‘not only on account of my own glory,
‘but likewise on the supposition, that
‘as I was acting under the eye of Gon-
‘zales, my conduct would be narrowly
‘observed.

‘I therefore exerted myself with un-
‘usual vigour, and as he began the at-
‘tack with the remains of my troop,
‘fought close by his side during the rest
‘of the engagement. I even acquired
‘his applause in the very heat of battle.
‘When his hat was struck off, and his
‘horse fell under him, I accommodated
‘and remounted him upon my own;
‘and having seized for my own use
‘another that belonged to a common
‘trooper, attended this stern commander
‘as before, and seconded him in all his
‘repeated efforts. But it was impossible
‘to withstand the numbers and im-
‘petuosity of the foe; and Don Gonzales
‘having had the mortification to see his
‘regiment cut in pieces, and the great-
‘est part of the army routed, was fain
‘to yield to the fortune of the day: yet
‘he retired as became a man of hon-
‘our and a Castilian; that is, he
‘marched off with great deliberation,
‘in the rear of the Spanish troops, and
‘frequently faced about to check the
‘pursuit of the enemy. Indeed, this

‘exercise of his courage had well nigh
‘cost him his life; for, in one of these
‘wheelings, he was left almost alone,
‘and a small party of the Portuguese
‘horse had actually cut off our com-
‘munication with the retreating forces
‘of Spain.

‘In this dilemma, we had no other
‘chance for saving our lives and liberty,
‘than that of opening a passage sword
‘in hand; and this was what Gonzales
‘instantly resolved to attempt. We ac-
‘cordingly recommended our souls to
‘God, and charging the line abreast of
‘another, bore down all opposition,
‘and were in a fair way of accomplish-
‘ing our retreat without farther dan-
‘ger; but the gallant Orgullo, in cross-
‘ing a ditch, had the misfortune to be
‘thrown from his horse, and was al-
‘most the same instant overtaken by
‘one of the Portuguese dragoons, whose
‘sword was already suspended over his
‘head, as he lay half-stunned with his
‘fall; when I rode up, discharged a
‘pistol in the ruffian’s brain, and seat-
‘ing my colonel on his horse, had the
‘good fortune to conduct him to a
‘place of safety.

‘Here he was provided with such
‘accommodation as his case required;
‘for he had been wounded in the battle,
‘and dangerously bruised by his fall:
‘and when all the necessary steps were
‘taken towards his recovery, I desired
‘to know if he had any farther com-
‘mands for his service, being resolved
‘to join the army without delay. I
‘thought proper to communicate this
‘question by message, because he had
‘not spoke one word to me during our
‘retreat, notwithstanding the good of-
‘fice he had received at my hands: a
‘reserve which I attributed to his pride,
‘and resented accordingly. He no soon-
‘er understood my intention, than he
‘desired to see me in his apartment,
‘and, as near as I can remember, spoke
‘to this effect.

“Were your father Don Alonzo
“alive, I should now, in consequence
“of your behaviour, banish every sug-
“gestion of resentment, and solicit his
“friendship with great sincerity. Yes,
“Don Diego, your virtue hath tri-
“umphed over that enmity I bore your
“house; and I upbraid myself with the
“ungenerous treatment you have suf-
“fered under my command. But it is
“not enough for me to withdraw that
“rigour

“rigour which it was unjust to exercise, and would be wicked to maintain: I must likewise atone for the injuries you have sustained, and make some suitable acknowledgment for that life which I have twice to-day owed to your valour and generosity. Whatever interest I have at court, shall be employed in your behalf; and I have other designs in your favour, which shall be disclosed in due season. Mean while, I desire you will still add one obligation to the debt which I have already incurred, and carry this billet, in person, to my Estifania, who, from the news of this fatal overthrow, must be in despair upon my account.”

“So saying, he presented a letter, directed to his lady, which I received in a transport of joy, with expressions suitable to the occasion, and immediately set out for his country-house, which happened to be about thirty leagues from the spot. This expedition was equally glorious and interesting; for my thoughts upon the road were engrossed by the hope of seeing Don Orgullo’s daughter and heiress Antonia, who was reported to be a young lady of great beauty, and the most amiable accomplishments. However ridiculous it may seem for a man to conceive a passion for an object which he hath never beheld, certain it is, my sentiments were so much prepossessed by the fame of her qualifications, that I must have fallen a victim to her charms, had they been much less powerful than they were. Notwithstanding the fatigues I had undergone in the field, I closed not an eye until I arrived at the gate of Gonzales, being determined to precede the report of the battle, that Madam D’Orgullo might not be alarmed for the life of her husband.

“I declared my errand, and was introduced into a saloon, where I had not waited above three minutes, when my colonel’s lady appeared, and in great confusion received the letter, exclaiming, “Heaven grant that Don Gonzales be well!” In reading the contents, she underwent a variety of agitations; but when she had perused the whole, her countenance regained its serenity; and regarding me with an air of ineffable complacency, “Don Diego,” said she, “while I lament

“the national calamity, in the defeat of our army, I at the same time feel the most sincere pleasure in seeing you upon this occasion; and, according to the directions of my dear lord, bid you heartily welcome to this house, as his preserver and friend. I was not unacquainted with your character before this last triumph of your virtue, and have often prayed to Heaven for some lucky determination of that fatal quarrel which raged so long between the family of Gonzales and your father’s house. My prayers have been heard, the long wished-for reconciliation is now effected; and I hope nothing will ever intervene to disturb this happy union.”

“To this polite and affectionate declaration, I made such a reply, as became a young man whose heart overflowed with joy and benevolence; and desired to know how soon her answer to my commander would be ready, that I might gratify his impatience with all possible dispatch. After having thanked me for this fresh proof of my attachment, she begged I would retire into a chamber, and repose myself from the uncommon fatigues I must have undergone; but finding I persisted in the resolution of returning to Don Gonzales, without allowing myself the least benefit of sleep, she left me engaged in conversation with an uncle of Don Gonzales, who lodged in the house, and gave orders that a collation should be prepared in another apartment, while she retired to her closet, and wrote a letter to her husband.

“In less than an hour from my first arrival, I was introduced into a most elegant dining-room, where a magnificent entertainment was served up, and where we were joined by Donna Estifania, and her beautiful daughter, the fair Antonia; who, advancing with the most amiable sweetness, thanked me, in very warm expressions of acknowledgment, for the generosity of my conduct towards her father. I had been ravished with her first appearance, which far exceeded my imagination, and my faculties were so disordered by this address, that I answered her compliment with the most awkward confusion. But this disorder did not turn to my prejudice in the opinion of that lovely creature,

“who

who has often told me in the sequel, that she gave herself credit for that perplexity in my behaviour, and that I never appeared more worthy of her regard and affection than at that juncture, when my dress was discomposed, and my whole person disfigured by the toils and duty of the preceding day; for this very dishabille presented itself to her reflect on as the immediate effect of that very merit by which I was intitled to her esteem.

Wretch that I am! to survive the loss of such an excellent woman, endeared to my remembrance by the most tender offices of wedlock, happily exercised for the space of five and twenty years! Forgive these tears; they are not the drops of weakness, but remorse. Not to trouble you with idle particulars, suffice it to say, I was favoured with such marks of distinction by Madam D'Orgullo, that she thought it incumbent upon her to let me know she had not over-acted her hospitality, and while we sat at table accosted me in these words. "You will not be surprized, Don Diego, at my expressions of regard, which I own are unusual from a Spanish lady to a young cavalier like you, when I communicate the contents of this letter from Don Gonzales." So saying, she put the billet into my hand, and I read these words, or words to this effect.

“AMIABLE ESTIFANIA,

“YOU will understand, that I am as well as a person can possibly be, who has this day lived to see the army of his king defeated. If you would know the particulars of this unfortunate action, your curiosity will be gratified by the bearer, Don Diego De Zelos, to whose virtue and bravery I am twice indebted for my life. I therefore desire you will receive him with that respect and gratitude, which you shall think due for such an obligation; and in entertaining him, dismiss that reserve, which often disgraces the Spanish hospitality. In a word, let your own virtue and beneficence conduct you upon this occasion, and let my Antonia's endeavours be joined with your own, in

doing honour to the preserver of her father. Adieu.”

Such a testimonial could not fail of being very agreeable to a young soldier, who, by this time, had begun to indulge the transporting hope of being happy in the arms of the adorable Antonia. I professed myself extremely happy in having met with an opportunity of acquiring such a degree of my colonel's esteem, entertained them with a detail of his personal prowess in the battle, and answered all their questions with that moderation which every man ought to preserve in speaking of his own behaviour. Our repast being ended, I took my leave of the ladies, and at parting received a letter from Donna Estifania to her husband, together with a ring of great value, which she begged I would accept as a token of her esteem. Thus loaded with honour and caresses, I set out on my return for the quarters of Don Gonzales, who could scarce credit his own eyes when I delivered his lady's billet; for he thought it impossible to perform such a journey in so short a time.

When he had glanced over the paper, “Don Diego,” said he, “by your short stay, one would imagine you had met with indifferent reception at my house: I hope Estifania has not been deficient in her duty?” I answered this question, by assuring him, my entertainment had been so agreeable in all respects, that nothing but my duty to him, could have induced me to give it up so soon. He then turned the conversation upon Antonia, and hinted his intention of giving her in marriage to a young cavalier, for whom he had a particular friendship. I was so much affected by this insinuation, which seemed at once to blast all my hopes of love and happiness, that the blood froze my face; I was seized with an universal trepidation, and even obliged to retire, on pretence of being suddenly taken ill.

Though Gonzales seemed to impute this disorder to fatigue and want of rest, he in his heart ascribed it to the true cause; and after having founded my sentiments to his own satisfaction, blessed me with a declaration,

tion, importing that I was the person upon whom he had pitched for a son-in-law. I will not trouble you with a repetition of what passed on this interesting occasion, but proceed to observe, that his intention in my favour was far from being disagreeable to his lady; and that, in a little time, I had the good fortune to espouse the charming Antonia, who submitted to the will of her father without reluctance.

Soon after this happy event, I was, by the influence of Don Gonzales, joined to my own interest, promoted to the command of a regiment, and served with honour during the remaining part of the war. After the treaty of Utrecht, I was employed in reducing the Catalans to their allegiance; and in an action with those obstinate rebels, had the misfortune to lose my father-in-law, who by that time was preferred to the rank of a major-general. The virtuous Estifania did not long survive this melancholy accident; and the loss of these indulgent parents, made such a deep impression upon the tender heart of my Antonia, that I took the first opportunity of removing her from a place, in which every object served to cherish her grief, to a pleasant villa near the city of Seville, which I purchased on account of its agreeable situation. That I might the more perfectly enjoy the possession of my amiable partner, who could no longer brook the thoughts of another separation, peace was no sooner re-established, than I obtained leave to resign my commission, and I wholly devoted myself to the joys of a domestick life.

Heaven seemed to smile upon our union, by blessing us with a son; whom, however, it was pleased to recal in his infancy, to our unspeakable grief and mortification; but, our mutual chagrin was afterwards alleviated, by the birth of a daughter, who seemed born with every accomplishment to excite the love and admiration of mankind. Why did nature debase such a master-piece with the mixture of an alloy, which hath involved herself and her whole family in perdition? But the ways of Providence are unsearchable. She hath paid the debt of her degeneracy; peace

be with her soul! the honour of my family is vindicated; though by a sacrifice which hath robbed me of every thing else that is valuable in life, and ruined my peace past all redemption! Yes, my friend, all the tortures that human tyranny can inflict, would be ease, tranquillity, and delight, to the unspeakable pangs and horrors I have felt!

But, to return from this digression. Serafina, which was the name of that little darling, as she grew up, not only disclosed all the natural graces of external beauty, but likewise manifested the most engaging sweetness of disposition, and a capacity for acquiring with ease, all the accomplishments of her sex. It is impossible to convey any adequate idea of a parent's raptures in the contemplation of such a fair blossom; she was the only pledge of our love, she was presumptive heiress to a large fortune, and likely to be the sole representative of two noble Castilian families. She was the delight of all who saw her, and a theme of praise for every tongue. You are not to suppose that the education of such a child was neglected. Indeed, it wholly engrossed the attention of me and my Antonia, and her proficiency rewarded our care. Before she had attained the age of fifteen, she was mistress of every elegant qualification, natural and acquired. Her person was, by that time, the confessed pattern of beauty. Her voice was enchantingly sweet, and she touched the lute with the most ravishing dexterity. Heaven and earth! how did my breast dilate with joy, at the thoughts of having given birth to such perfection! how did my heart gush with paternal fondness, whenever I beheld this ornament of my name! and what scenes of endearing transport, have I enjoyed with my Antonia, in mutual congratulation upon our parental happiness!

Serafina, accomplished as she was, could not fail to make conquests among the Spanish cavaliers, who are famous for sensibility in love. Indeed, she never appeared without a numerous train of admirers; and though we had bred her up in that freedom of conversation and intercourse, which holds a middle space between the French licence and Spanish restraint,

she

‘ she was now so much exposed to the
 ‘ addresses of promiscuous gallantry,
 ‘ that we found it necessary to retrench
 ‘ the liberty of our house, and behave
 ‘ to our male visitants with great re-
 ‘ serve and circumspection, that our
 ‘ honour and peace might run no risk
 ‘ from the youth and inexperience of
 ‘ our daughter.

‘ This caution produced overtures
 ‘ from a great many young gentlemen
 ‘ of rank and distinction, who courted
 ‘ my alliance by demanding Serafina in
 ‘ marriage; and from the number, I
 ‘ had actually selected one person, who
 ‘ was in all respects worthy the posses-
 ‘ sion of such an inestimable prize. His
 ‘ name was Don Manuel De Mendoza;
 ‘ his birth was noble, and his charac-
 ‘ ter dignified with repeated acts of
 ‘ generosity and virtue. Yet, before I
 ‘ would signify to him my approbation
 ‘ of his suit, I resolved to inform my-
 ‘ self, whether or not the heart of Se-
 ‘ rafina was totally unengaged, and in-
 ‘ different to any other object, that I
 ‘ might not lay a tyrannical restraint
 ‘ upon her inclinations. The result of
 ‘ my enquiry was a full conviction of
 ‘ her having hitherto been deaf to the
 ‘ voice of love; and this piece of infor-
 ‘ mation, together with my own senti-
 ‘ ments in his favour, I communicated to
 ‘ Don Manuel, who heard these tidings
 ‘ with transports of gratitude and joy.
 ‘ He was immediately favoured with
 ‘ opportunities of acquiring the affection
 ‘ of my daughter, and his endeavours
 ‘ were at first received with such re-
 ‘ spectful civility, as might have been
 ‘ easily warmed into a mutual passion,
 ‘ had not the evil genius of our family
 ‘ interposed.

‘ O, my friend! how shall I describe
 ‘ the depravity of that unhappy vir-
 ‘ gin’s sentiments! how recount the
 ‘ particulars of my own dishonour! I
 ‘ that am descended from a long line of
 ‘ illustrious Castilians, who never re-
 ‘ ceived an injury they did not revenge;
 ‘ but washed away every blemish in
 ‘ their fame, with the blood of those
 ‘ who attempted to stain it. In that
 ‘ circumstance, I have imitated the ex-
 ‘ ample of my glorious progenitors;
 ‘ and that consideration alone, hath
 ‘ supported me against all the assaults
 ‘ of despair.

‘ As I grudged no pains and expence
 ‘ in perfecting the education of Sera-

‘ fina, my doors were open to every
 ‘ person who made an extraordinary
 ‘ figure in the profession of those amu-
 ‘ sing sciences, in which she delighted.
 ‘ The house of Don Diego De Zelos
 ‘ was a little academy for painting,
 ‘ poetry, and musick; and Heaven de-
 ‘ creed that it should fall a sacrifice to
 ‘ it’s regard for these fatal and delu-
 ‘ sive arts. Among other preceptors
 ‘ it was her fate to be under the in-
 ‘ struction of a cursed German; who,
 ‘ though his profession was drawing,
 ‘ understood the elements and theory
 ‘ of musick, possessed a large fund of
 ‘ learning and taste, and was a person
 ‘ remarkable for his agreeable conversa-
 ‘ tion. This traitor, who, like you, had
 ‘ lost one eye, I not only admitted into
 ‘ my house, for the improvement of my
 ‘ daughter, but even distinguished with
 ‘ particular marks of confidence and
 ‘ favour; little thinking he had either
 ‘ inclination or capacity to debauch the
 ‘ sentiments of my child. I was re-
 ‘ joiced beyond measure, to see with
 ‘ what alacrity she received his lessons,
 ‘ with what avidity she listened to his
 ‘ discourse, which was always equally
 ‘ moral, instructing, and entertaining.

‘ Antonia seemed to vie with me,
 ‘ in expressions of regard for this ac-
 ‘ complished stranger, whom she could
 ‘ not help supposing to be a person of
 ‘ rank and family, reduced to his pre-
 ‘ sent situation by some unfortunate
 ‘ vicissitude of fate. I was disposed to
 ‘ concur with this opinion, and actu-
 ‘ ally conjured him to make me his
 ‘ confident, with such protestations, as
 ‘ left him no room to doubt my honour
 ‘ and beneficence; but he still persisted
 ‘ in declaring himself the son of an ob-
 ‘ scure mechanick in Bohemia; an ori-
 ‘ gin to which surely no man would
 ‘ pretend, who had the least claim to
 ‘ nobility of birth. While I was thus
 ‘ undeceived in my conjecture, touch-
 ‘ ing his birth and quality, I was con-
 ‘ firmed in an opinion of his integrity
 ‘ and moderation, and looked upon him
 ‘ as a man of honour, in despite of the
 ‘ lowness of his pedigree. Nevertheless,
 ‘ he was at bottom a most perfidious
 ‘ wretch, and all this modesty and self-
 ‘ denial, were the effects of the most vil-
 ‘ lainous dissimulation, a cloak under
 ‘ which he unsuspected robbed me of
 ‘ my honour and my peace.

‘ Not to trouble you with particulars,
 ‘ the

the recital of which would tear my heart-strings with indignation and remorse, I shall only observe, that by the power of his infernal insinuation, he fascinated the heart of Serafina, brought over Antonia herself to the interests of his passion, and at once detached them both from their duty and religion. Heaven and earth! how dangerous, how irresistible, is the power of infatuation! While I remained in the midst of this blind security, waiting for the nuptials of my daughter, and indulging myself with the vain prospect of her approaching felicity, Antonia found means to protract the negociation of the marriage, by representing, that it would be pity to deprive Serafina of the opportunity she then had of profiting by the German's instructions; and upon that account I prevailed upon Don Manuel to bridle the impatience of his love.

During this interval, as I one evening enjoyed the cool air in my own garden, I was accosted by an old duenna, who had been my nurse, and lived in the family since the time of my childhood. "My duty," said she, "will no longer permit me to wink in silence, at the wrongs I see you daily suffer. Dismiss that German from your house, without delay, if you respect the glory of your name, and the rites of our holy religion: the stranger is an abominable heretick; and, grant Heaven! he may not have already poisoned the minds of those you hold most dear." I had been extremely alarmed at the beginning of this address; but finding the imputation limited to the article of religion, in which, thank God, I am no bigot, I recovered my serenity of disposition, thanked the old woman for her zeal, commended her piety, and encouraged her to persevere in making observations on such subjects as should concern my honour and my quiet.

We live in such a world of wickedness and fraud, that a man cannot be too vigilant in his own defence: had I employed such spies from the beginning, I should, in all probability, have been at this day in possession of every comfort that renders life agreeable. The duenna, thus authorized, employed her sagacity with such

success, that I had reason to suspect the German of a design upon the heart of Serafina; but, as the presumptions did not amount to conviction, I contented myself with exiling him from my house, under the pretext of having discovered that he was an enemy to the catholic church; and forthwith appointed a day for the celebration of my daughter's marriage with Don Manuel De Mendosa. I could easily perceive a cloud of melancholy overspread the faces of Serafina and her mother, when I declared these my resolutions; but, as they made no objection to what I proposed, I did not, at that time, enter into an explanation of the true motives that influenced my conduct. Both parties were, probably, afraid of such expostulation.

Mean while preparations were made for the espousals of Serafina; and, notwithstanding the anxiety I had undergone, on account of her connection with the German, I began to think that her duty, her glory, had triumphed over all such low-born considerations, if ever they had been entertained; because she, and even Antonia, seemed to expect the ceremony with resignation, though the features of both still retained evident marks of concern, which I willingly imputed to the mutual prospect of their separation. This, however, was but a faithless calm, that soon, (ah! too soon) brought forth a tempest, which hath wrecked my hopes.

Two days before the appointed union of Don Manuel and Serafina, I was informed by the duenna, that while she accompanied Antonia's waiting-maid at church, she had seen her receive a billet from an old woman; who, kneeling at her side, had conveyed it in such a mysterious manner, as awakened the duenna's apprehensions about her young lady; she had therefore hastened home, to communicate this piece of intelligence, that I might have an opportunity of examining the messenger before she should have time to deposit her trust. I could not help shivering with fearful presages upon this occasion, and even abhorring the person to whose duty and zeal I was beholden for the intelligence, even while I endeavoured to persuade myself, that the enquiry would end in

the

the detection of some paltry intrigue, between the maid and her own gallant, I intercepted her in returning from church; and commanding her to follow me to a convenient place, extorted from her, by dint of threats, the fatal letter, which I read to this effect.

"THE whole business of my life, O divine Serafina! will be to repay that affection I have been so happy as to engage. With what transport, then, shall I obey your summons in performing that enterprise, which will rescue you from the bed of a detested rival, and put myself in full possession of a jewel which I value infinitely more than life. Yes, adorable creature, I have provided every thing for your escape; and at midnight will attend you in your own apartment, from whence you shall be conveyed into a land of liberty and peace, where you will unmolested enjoy the purity of that religion you have espoused, and in full security bless the arms of your ever faithful

" ORLANDO."

' Were you a fond parent, a tender husband, and a noble Castilian, I should not need to mention the unutterable horrors that took possession of my bosom when I perused this accursed letter, by which I learned the apostasy, disobedience, and degeneracy, of my idolized Serafina, who had overthrown and destroyed the whole plan of felicity which I had erected, and blasted all the glories of my name; and when the wretched messenger, terrified by my menaces and agitation, confessed that Antonia herself was privy to the guilt of her daughter, whom she had solemnly betrothed to that vile German, in the sight of Heaven; and that by her connivance this plebeian intended that very night to bereave me of my child; I was for some moments stupified with grief and amazement, that gave way to an ecstasy of rage, which had well nigh terminated in despair and distraction.

I now tremble, and my head grows giddy with the remembrance of that dreadful occasion: behold how the drops trickle down my forehead! this

agony is a fierce and familiar visitant; I shall banish it anon. I summoned my pride, my resentment, to my assistance; these are the cordials that support me against all other reflections; those were the auxiliaries that enabled me, in the day of trial, to perform that sacrifice which my honour demanded, in a strain so loud, as to drown the cries of nature, love, and compassion. Yes, they espoused that glory which humanity would have betrayed; and my revenge was noble, though unnatural.

' My scheme was soon laid, my resolution soon taken: I privately confined the wretch who had been the industrious slave of this infamous conspiracy, that she might take no step to frustrate or interrupt the execution of my design. Then repairing to the house of an apothecary, who was devoted to my service, communicated my intention, which he durst not condemn, and could not reveal, without breaking the oath of secrecy I had imposed; and he furnished me with two phials of poison for the dismal catastrophe I had planned. Thus provided, I, on pretence of sudden business at Seville, carefully avoided the dear, the wretched pair, whom I had devoted to death, that my heart might not relent by means of those tender ideas which the sight of them would have infallibly inspired; and when daylight vanished, took my station near that part of the house through which the villain must have entered on his hellish purpose. There I stood in a state of horrid expectation; my soul ravaged with the different passions that assailed it, until the fatal moment arrived; when I perceived the traitor approach the window of a lower apartment, which led into that of Serafina, and gently lifting the casement, which was purposely left unsecured, insinuate half of his body into the house; then rushing upon him in a transport of fury, I plunged my sword into his heart, crying, "Villain, receive the reward of thy treachery and presumption!"

' The steel was so well aimed as to render a repetition of the stroke unnecessary; he uttered one groan, and fell breathless at my feet. Exulting with this first success of my revenge, I penetrated into the chamber, where the robber of my peace was expected by

by the unhappy Serafina and her mother, who seeing me enter with a most savage aspect, and a sword reeking with the vengeance I had taken, seemed almost petrified with fear. "Behold," said I, "the blood of that base plebeian, who made an attempt upon the honour of my house: your conspiracy against the unfortunate Don Diego De Zelos is now discovered; that presumptuous slave, the favoured Orlando, is now no more." Scarce had I pronounced these words, when a loud scream was uttered by both the unhappy victims. "If Orlando is slain," cried the infuriated Serafina, "what have I to do with life?—O my dear lord! my husband, and my lover! how are our promised joys at once cut off!—Here strike, my father! compleat your barbarous sacrifice; the spirit of the murdered Orlando still hovers for his wife." These frantick exclamations, in which she was joined by Antonia, kept up the fury of my resentment, which by meekness and submission might have been weakened and rendered ineffectual. "Yes, hapless wretches," I replied, "ye shall enjoy your wish; the honour of my name requires that both shall die; yet I will not mangle the breast of Antonia, on which I have so often reposed; I will not shed the blood of Zelos, nor disfigure the beauteous form of Serafina, on which I have so often gazed with wonder and unspeakable delight: here is an elixir, to which I trust the consummation of my revenge."

So saying, I emptied the phials into separate cups, and presenting one in each hand, the miserable, the fair offenders, instantly received the destined draughts, which they drank without hesitation: then praying to Heaven for the wretched Don Diego, sunk upon the same couch, and expired without a groan. O well-contrived beverage! O happy composition, by which all the miseries of life are so easily cured!

Such was the fate of Antonia and Serafina: these hands were the instruments that deprived them of life; these eyes beheld them the richest prize that Death had ever won. Powers supreme! does Don Diego live to make this recapitulation? I have done my duty;

but, ah! I am haunted by the furies of remorse: I am tortured with the incessant stings of remembrance and regret; even now the images of my wife and daughter present themselves to my imagination. All the scenes of happiness I have enjoyed as a lover, husband, and parent, all the endearing hopes I have cherished, now pass in review before me, embittering the circumstances of my inexpressible woe; and I consider myself as a solitary outcast from all the comforts of society! But enough of these unmanly complaints, the yearnings of nature are too importunate.

Having compleated my vengeance, I retired into my closet, and furnishing myself with some ready-money and jewels of considerable value, went into the stable, saddled my favourite steed, which I instantly mounted, and before the tumults of my breast subsided, found myself at the town of St. Lucar. There I learned from enquiry, that there was a Dutch bark in the harbour ready to sail; upon which I addressed myself to the master, who for a suitable gratification was prevailed upon to weigh anchor that same night; so that embarking without delay, I soon bid eternal adieu to my native country. It was not from reason and reflection, that I took these measures for my personal safety; but in consequence of an involuntary instinct, that seems to operate in the animal machine, while the faculty of thinking is suspended.

To what a dreadful reckoning was I called, when reason resumed her function! you may believe me, my friend, when I assure you, that I should not have outlived those tragedies I acted, had I not been restrained from doing violence upon myself, by certain considerations, which no man of honour ought to set aside. I could not bear the thought of falling ingloriously by the hand of an executioner, and intailing disgrace upon a family that knew no stain; and I was deterred from putting an end to my own misery, by the apprehensions of posthumous censure, which would have presented me as a desponding wretch, utterly destitute of that patience, fortitude, and resignation, which are the characteristicks of a true Castilian. I was also influenced by religious motives,



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tives, that suggested to me the necessity of living to atone by my sufferings and sorrow for the guilt I had incurred, in complying with a savage punctilio, which is, I fear, displeasing in the sight of Heaven.

These were the reasons that opposed my entrance into that peaceful harbour which death presented to my view; and they were soon reinforced by another principle, that sanctioned my determination to continue at the servile oar of life. In consequence of unfavourable winds, our vessel for some days made small progress in her voyage to Holland, and near the coast of Galicia we were joined by an English ship from Vigo, the master of which gave us to understand, that before he set sail, a courier had arrived from Madrid at that place, with orders for the corregidor to prevent the escape of any native Spaniard by sea from any port within his district; and to use his utmost endeavours to apprehend the person of Don Diego De Zelos, who was suspected of treasonable practices against the state. Such an order, with a minute description of my person, was at the same time dispatched to all the sea-ports and frontier places in Spain.

You may easily suppose how I, who was already overwhelmed with distress, could bear this aggravation of misfortune and disgrace: I, who had always maintained the reputation of loyalty, which was acquired at the hazard of my life, and the expence of my blood! To deal candidly, I must own, that this intelligence roused me from a lethargy of grief, which had begun to overpower my faculties. I immediately imputed this dishonourable charge to the evil offices of some villain, who had basely taken the advantage of my deplorable situation; and I was inflamed, inspirited with the desire of vindicating my fame and revenging the injury. Thus animated, I resolved to disguise myself effectually from the observation of those spies which every nation finds it's account in employing in foreign countries; I purchased this habit from the Dutch navigator, in whose house I kept myself concealed, after our arrival at Amsterdam, until my beard was grown to a sufficient length to favour my design, and then appeared as a

Persian dealer in jewels. As I could gain no satisfactory information touching myself in this country, had no purpose to pursue, and was extremely miserable among a people, who being mercenary and unsocial, were very ill-adapted to alleviate the horrors of my condition; I gratified my landlord for his important services with the best part of my effects; and having, by his means, procured a certificate from the magistracy, repaired to Rotterdam, from whence I set out in a travelling carriage for Antwerp, on my way to this capital; hoping, with a succession of different objects, to mitigate the anguish of my mind, and by the most industrious enquiry to learn such particulars of that false impeachment, as would enable me to take measures for my own justification, as well as for projecting a plan of revenge against the vile perfidious author.

This, I imagined, would be no difficult task, considering the friendship and intercourse subsisting between the Spanish and French nations, and the communicative disposition for which the Parisians are renowned; but I have found myself egregiously deceived in my expectation: the officers of the police in this city are so inquisitive and vigilant, that the most minute action of a stranger is scrutinized with great severity; and, although the inhabitants are very frank in discoursing on indifferent subjects, they are at the same time extremely cautious in avoiding all conversation that turns upon state occurrences and maxims of government. In a word, the peculiarity of my appearance subjects me so much to particular observation, that I have hitherto thought proper to devour my griefs in silence, and even to bear the want of almost every convenience, rather than hazard a premature discovery, by offering my jewels to sale.

In this emergency, I have been so far fortunate as to become acquainted with you, whom I look upon as a man of honour and humanity. Indeed, I was at first sight prepossessed in your favour; for, notwithstanding the mistakes which men daily commit in judging from appearances, there is something in the physiognomy of a stranger, from which one cannot help forming an opinion of his character

‘and disposition. For once, my penetration hath not failed me; your behaviour justifies my decision, you have treated me with that sympathy and respect which none but the generous will pay to the unfortunate. I have trusted you accordingly: I have put my life, my honour in your power; and I must beg leave to depend upon your friendship, for obtaining that satisfaction, for which alone I seek to live. Your employment engages you in the gay world: you daily mingle with the societies of men; the domesticks of the Spanish ambassador will not shun your acquaintance; you may frequent the coffee-houses to which they resort; and, in the course of these occasions, unsuspected, inform yourself of that mysterious charge which lies heavy on the fame of the unfortunate Don Diego. I must likewise implore your assistance in converting my jewels into money, that I may breathe independent of man, until Heaven shall permit me to finish this weary pilgrimage of life.’

CHAP. XXVII.

A FLAGRANT INSTANCE OF FATHOM'S VIRTUE, IN THE MANNER OF HIS RETREAT TO ENGLAND.

FATHOM, who had lent an attentive ear to every circumstance of this disastrous story, no sooner heard it concluded, than with an aspect of generous and cordial compassion, not even unattended with tears, he consoled the lamentable fate of Don Diego De Zelos; deplored the untimely death of the gentle Antonia and the fair Serafina; and undertook the interells of the wretched Castilian, with such warmth of sympathizing zeal, as drew a flood from his eyes, while he wrung his benefactor's hand in a transport of gratitude. Those were literally tears of joy, or at least of satisfaction on both sides; as our hero wept with affection and attachment to the jewels that were to be committed to his care: but, far from discovering the true source of his tenderness, he affected to dissuade the Spaniard from parting with the diamonds, which he counselled him to reserve for a more pressing occasion; and, in the mean time, earnestly intreated him to depend upon his friendship, for

present relief. This generous proffer served only to confirm Don Diego's resolution, which he forthwith executed, by putting into the hands of Ferdinand jewels to the value of a thousand crowns, and desiring him to detain for his own use any part of the sum they would raise.

Our adventurer thanked him for the good opinion he entertained of his integrity, an opinion fully manifested in honouring him with such important confidence; and assured him he would transact his affairs with the utmost diligence, caution, and dispatch. The evening being by this time almost consumed, these new allies retired separately to rest: though each passed the night without repose, in very different reflections; the Castilian being, as usual, agitated with the unceasing pangs of his unalterable misery, interspersed with gleaming hopes of revenge; and Fathom being kept awake with revolving plans for turning his fellow-lodger's credulity to his own advantage. From the nature of the Spaniard's situation, he might have appropriated the jewels to himself, and remained in Paris, without fear of a prosecution, because the injured party had, by the above narrative, left his life and liberty at discretion. But he did not think himself secure from the personal resentment of an enraged desperate Castilian; and therefore determined to withdraw himself privately into that country where he had all along proposed to fix the standard of his finesse, which fortune had now impowered him to exercise according to his wish.

Bent upon this retreat, he went abroad in the morning, on pretence of acting in the concerns of his friend Don Diego, and having hired a post-chaise to be ready at the dawn of next day, returned to his lodgings, where he cajoled the Spaniard with a feigned report of his negotiation; then securing his most valuable effects about his person, arose with the cock, repaired to the place at which he had appointed to meet the postilion with the carriage, and set out for England without farther delay; leaving the unhappy Zelos to the horrors of indigence, and the additional agony of this fresh disappointment. Yet he was not the only person affected by the abrupt departure of Fathom, which was hastened by the importunities,

ties, threats, and reproaches of his landlord's daughter, whom he had debauched under promise of marriage, and now left in the fourth month of her pregnancy.

Notwithstanding the dangerous adventure in which he had been formerly involved by travelling in the night, he did not think proper to make the usual halts on this journey, for sleep or refreshment; nor did he once quit the chaise, till his arrival at Boulogne, which he reached in twenty hours, after his departure from Paris. Here he thought he might safely indulge himself with a comfortable meal; accordingly, he bespoke a poulard for dinner, and while that was preparing, went forth to view the city and harbour. When he beheld the white cliffs of Albion, his heart throbbed with all the joy of a beloved son, who after a tedious and fatiguing voyage, reviews the chimnies of his father's house: he surveyed the neighbouring coast of England, with fond and longing eyes, like another Moses reconnoitring the land of Canaan from the top of Mount Pisgah: and to such a degree of impatience was he inflamed by the sight, that instead of proceeding to Calais, he resolved to take his passage directly from Boulogne, even if he should hire a vessel for the purpose. With these sentiments, he enquired if there was any ship bound for England, and was so fortunate as to find the master of a small bark, who intended to weigh anchor for Deal that same evening at high water.

Transported with this information, he immediately agreed for his passage, sold the post-chaise to his landlord for thirty guineas, as a piece of furniture for which he could have no farther use, purchased a portmanteau, together with some linen and wearing-apparel, and at the recommendation of his host took into his service an extra postilion or helper, who had formerly wore the livery of a travelling marquis. This new domestick, whose name was Maurice, underwent with great applause the examination of our hero, who perceived in him a fund of sagacity and presence of mind, by which he was excellently qualified for being the valet of an adventurer; he was therefore accommodated with a second-hand suit, and another shirt, and at once listed under the banners of Count Fathom,

who spent the whole afternoon in giving him proper instructions for the regulation of his conduct.

Having settled these preliminaries to his own satisfaction, he and his baggage were embarked about six o'clock in the month of September, and it was not without emotion that he found himself benighted upon the great deep, of which, before the preceding day, he had never enjoyed even the most distant prospect. However, he was not a man to be afraid, where there was really no appearance of danger; and the agreeable presages of future fortune supported his spirits, amidst the disagreeable nausea which commonly attends landmen at sea, until he was set ashore upon the beach at Deal, which he entered in good health about seven o'clock in the morning.

Like Cæsar, however, he found some difficulty in landing, on account of the swelling surf, that tumbled about with such violence as had almost overset the cutter that carried him on shore; and in his eagerness to jump upon the strand, his foot slipped from the side of the boat, so that he was thrown forwards in an horizontal direction, and his hands were the first part of him that touched the English ground. Upon this occasion, he, in imitation of Scipio's behaviour on the coast of Africk, hailed the omen, and grasping an handful of the sand, was heard to exclaim, in the Italian language, 'Ah, ha! old England, I have thee fast!'

As he walked up to the inn, followed by Maurice loaded with his portmanteau, he congratulated himself upon his happy voyage, and the peaceable possession of his spoil, and could not help snuffing up the British air with marks of infinite relish and satisfaction. His first care was to recompence himself for the want of sleep he had undergone, and after he had sufficiently recruited himself with several hours of uninterrupted repose, he set out in a post-chaise for Canterbury, where he took a place in the London stage, which, he was told would depart next morning, the coach being already full. On this very first day of his arrival, he perceived between the English and the people among whom he had hitherto lived, such essential difference in customs, appearance, and way of living, as inspired him with high notions of that British freedom, opulence, and convenience, on which

which he had often heard his mother expatiate. On the road, he feasted his eye-sight with the verdant hills covered with flocks of sheep, the fruitful vales parcelled out into cultivated inclosures; the very cattle seemed to profit by the wealth of their masters, being large, sturdy, and sleek; and every peasant breathed the insolence of liberty and independence. In a word, he viewed the wide-extended plains of Kent, with a lover's eye, and his ambition becoming romantick, could not help fancying himself another conqueror of the isle.

He was not, however, long amused by these vain chimeras, which soon vanished before other reflections of more importance and solidity. His imagination, it must be owned, was at all times too chaste, to admit those overweening hopes, which often mislead the mind of a projector. He had studied mankind with incredible diligence, and knew perfectly well how far he could depend on the passions and foibles of human nature. That he might now act consistent with his former sagacity, he resolved to pass himself upon his fellow-travellers for a French gentleman, equally a stranger to the language and country of England, in order to glean from their discourse, such intelligence as might avail him in his future operations; and his lacquey was tutored accordingly.

CHAP. XXVIII.

SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS FELLOW-TRAVELLERS.

THOSE who had taken places for the coach, understanding the sixth seat was engaged by a foreigner, determined to profit by his ignorance; and, with that politeness which is peculiar to this happy island, fixed themselves in the vehicle in such a manner, before he had the least intimation of their design, that he found it barely practicable to insinuate himself sidelong between a corpulent quaker and a fat Wapping-landlady, in which attitude he stuck fast, like a thin quarto between two voluminous dictionaries on a bookseller's shelf; and, as if the pain and inconvenience of such compression was not sufficient matter of chagrin, the greatest part of

the company entertained themselves with laughing at his ludicrous station.

The jolly dame at his left-hand, observed, with a loud exclamation of mirth, that Monsieur would be soon better acquainted with a buttock of English beef; and said, by that time they should arrive at their dining-place, he might be spitted without larding. 'Yes, verily,' replied Obadiah, who was a wag in his way, 'but the swine's fat will be all 'on one side.'—'So much the better 'for you,' cried mine hostess, 'for that 'side is all your own.' The quaker was not so much disconcerted by the quickness of this repartee, but that he answered with great deliberation, 'I 'thank thee for thy love, but will not 'profit by thy loss; especially as I like 'not the savour of these outlandish 'fowls; they are profane birds of passage, relished only by the children of 'vanity, like thee.'

The plump gentlewoman took umbrage at this last expression, which she considered as a double reproach, and repeated the words, 'Children of vanity!' with an emphasis of resentment. 'I believe, if the truth were known,' said she, 'there's more vanity than midriff 'in that great belly of yours, for all 'your pretending to humility and religion. Sirrah! my corporation is made 'up of good, wholesome English fat; 'but you are puffed up with the wind 'of vanity and delusion; and when it 'begins to gripe your entrails, you pretend to have a motion, and then get 'up and preach nonsense: yet, you'll 'take it upon you to call your betters children. Marry come up, Mr. 'Goosecap! I have got children that are 'as good men as you, or any hypocritical trembler in England.'

A person who sat opposite to the quaker, hearing this remonstrance, which seemed pregnant with contention, interposed in the conversation with a conscious leer, and begged there might be no rupture between the spirit and the flesh. By this remonstrance, he relieved Obadiah from the satire of this female orator, and brought the whole vengeance of her elocution upon his own head. 'Flesh!' cried she, with all the ferocity of an enraged Thalestris, 'none of your names, Mr. Yellow-chaps. What! I warrant you have 'an antipathy to flesh, because you 'yourself

yourself are nothing but skin and bone. I suppose you are some poor starved journeyman taylor come from France, where you have been learning to cabbage, and have not seen a good meal of victuals these seven years; you have been living upon rye-bread and soup-maigre, and now you come over like a walking atomy, with a rat's tail at your wig, and a tinsey jacket; and so, forsooth, you set up for a gentleman, and pretend to find fault with a surlain of roast beef.'

The gentleman heard this address with admirable patience; and, when she had rung out her alarm, very coolly replied: 'Any thing but your stinking fish, Madam. Since when, I pray, have you travelled in stage-coaches, and left off your old profession of crying oysters in winter, and rotten mackarel in June? You was then known by the name of Kate Brawn, and in good repute among the ale-houses in Thames-street, till that unlucky amour with the master of a corn-vessel, in which he was unfortunately detected by his own spouse: but you seem to have risen by that fall; and I wish you joy of your present plight: though considering your education on Bear Key, you can give but a sorry account of yourself.'

The amazon, though neither exhausted nor dismayed, was really confounded at the temper and assurance of this antagonist, who had gathered all these anecdotes from the fertility of his own invention; after a short pause, however, she poured forth a torrent of obloquy sufficient to overwhelm any person who had not been used to take up arms against such seas of trouble; and a dispute ensued, which would have not only disgraced the best orators on the Thames, but even have made a figure in the celebration of the Eleusinian mysteries, during which the Athenian matrons rallied one another from different waggons, with that freedom of altercation so happily preserved in this our age and country.

Such a redundancy of epithets, and variety of metaphors, tropes, and figures were uttered between these well-matched opponents, that an epick bard would have found his account in listening to the contest; which, in all probability, would not have been confined to words, had it not been interrupted for the sake

of a young woman of an agreeable countenance and modest carriage; who, being shocked at some of their flowers of speech, and terrified by the menacing looks and gestures of the fiery-featured dame, began to scream aloud, and beg leave to quit the coach. Her perturbation put an end to the high debate. The sixth passenger, who had not opened his mouth, endeavoured to comfort her with assurances of protection. The quaker proposed a cessation of arms; the male disputant acquiesced in the proposal, assuring the company he had entered the lists for their entertainment only, without acquiring the least grudge or ill-will to the fat gentlewoman, whom, he protested, he had never seen before that day, and who, for aught he knew, was a person of credit and reputation. He then held forth his hand in token of amity, and asked pardon of the offended party, who was appeased by his submission; and, in testimony of her benevolence, presented to the other female, whom she had discomposed, an Hungary-water bottle filled with cherry-brandy, recommending it as a much more powerful remedy than the sal-volatile, which the other held to her nose.

Peace being thus re-established, in a treaty comprehending Obadiah and all present, it will not be improper to give the reader some farther information touching the several characters assembled in this vehicle. The quaker was a London merchant, who had been at Deal, superintending the repairs of a ship, which had suffered by a storm in the Downs. The Wapping-landlady, was on her return from the same place, where she had attended the payment of a man of war, with sundry powers of attorney, granted by the sailors, who had lived upon credit at her house. Her competitor in fame was a dealer in wine, a smuggler of French lace, and a petty gamester, just arrived from Paris, in the company of an English barber, who sat on his right-hand; and the young woman was daughter of a country curate, in her way to London, where she was bound apprentice to a milliner.

Hitherto Fathom had sat in silent astonishment at the manners of his fellow-travellers, which far exceeded the notions he had pre-conceived of English plainness and rusticity: he found himself a monument of that disregard and contempt which a stranger never fails

to meet with from the inhabitants of this island; and saw with surprise, an agreeable young creature sit as solitary and unheeded as himself. He was, indeed, allured by the roses of her complexion, and the innocence of her aspect, and began to repent of having pretended ignorance of the language, by which he was restrained from exercising his eloquence upon her heart; he resolved, however, to ingratiate himself, if possible, by the courtesy and politeness of dumb-show, and for that purpose put his eyes in motion without farther delay.

C H A P. XXIX.

ANOTHER PROVIDENTIAL DELIVERANCE, FROM THE EFFECTS OF THE SMUGGLER'S INGENIOUS CONJECTURES.

DURING these deliberations, the wine-merchant, with a view to make a parade of his superior parts and breeding, as well as to pave the way for a match at backgammon, made a tender of his snuff-box to our adventurer, and asked in bad French, how he travelled from Paris. This question produced a series of interrogations, concerning the place of Ferdinand's abode in that city, and his business in England; so that he was fain to practise the science of defence, and answered with such ambiguity as aroused the suspicion of the smuggler, who began to believe our hero had some very cogent reason for evading his curiosity: he immediately set his reflection at work, and after various conjectures, fixed upon Fathom's being the young pretender. Big with this supposition, he eyed him with the most earnest attention, comparing his features with those of the chevalier's portrait, which he had seen in France; and though the faces were as unlike as any two human faces could be, found the resemblance so striking as to dispel all his doubts, and persuade him to introduce the stranger to some justice on the road: a step by which he would not only manifest his zeal for the Protestant succession, but also acquire the splendid reward proposed by parliament, to any person who should apprehend that famous adventurer.

These ideas intoxicated the brain of

this man to such a pitch of enthusiasm, that he actually believed himself in possession of the thirty thousand pounds, and amused his fancy with a variety of magnificent projects to be executed by means of that acquisition; until his reverie was interrupted by the halting of the coach at the inn where the passengers used to eat their breakfasts. Waked as he was from the dream of happiness, it had made such impression on his mind, that seeing Fathom rise up with an intention to alight, he took it for granted his design was to escape, and seizing him by the collar, called aloud for assistance in the king's name.

Our hero, whose sagacity and presence of mind very often supplied the place of courage, instead of being terrified at this assault, which might have disturbed the tranquillity of an ordinary villain, was so perfectly master of every circumstance of his own situation, as to know at once, that the aggressor could not possibly have the least cause of complaint against him; and therefore, imputing this violence either to madness or mistake, very deliberately suffered himself to be made prisoner by the people of the house, who ran to the coach-door, in obedience to the summons of the wine-merchant. The rest of the company were struck dumb with surprise and consternation at this sudden adventure, and the quaker dreading some fell resistance on the side of the outlandish man, unpinned the other coach-door in the twinkling of an eye, and trundled himself into the mud for safety. The others seeing the temper and resignation of the prisoner, soon recovered their recollection, and began to enquire into the cause of his arrest: upon which the captor, whose teeth chattered with terror and impatience, gave them to understand, that he was a state criminal, and demanded their help in conveying him to justice.

Luckily for both parties, there happened to be at the inn a company of squires just returned from the death of a leash of hares, which they had ordered to be dressed for dinner, and among these gentlemen was one of the quorum, to whom the accuser had immediate recourse, marching before the captive, who walked very peaceably between the landlord and one of his waiters, and followed by a crowd of spectators, some of whom had secured the faithful Maurice,

rice, who, in his behaviour, closely imitated the deliberation of his master. In this order did the procession advance to the apartment in which the magistrate with his fellows of the chace, sat smoaking his morning pipe over a tankard of strong ale; and the smuggler being directed to the right person, 'May it please your worship,' said he, 'I have brought this foreigner before you, on a violent suspicion of his being a proclaimed outlaw, and I desire, before these witnesses, that my title may be made good to the reward that shall become due upon his conviction.'

'Friend,' replied the justice, 'I know nothing of you or your titles; but, this I know, if you have any information to give in, you must come to my house when I am at home, and proceed in a lawful way; that is, d'ye mind me, if you swear as how this here person is an outlaw, then if so be as he has nothing to say to the contrary, my clerk shall make out a mittimus; and so to gaol with him till next size.'—'But, Sir,' answered the impeacher, 'this is a case that admits of no delay; the person I have apprehended is a prisoner of consequence to the state.'—'How, fellow!' cried the magistrate, interrupting him, 'is there any person of more consequence than one of his majesty's justices of the peace, who is besides a considerable member of the landed interest? D'ye know, sirrah, who you are talking to? If you don't go about your business, I believe I shall lay you by the heels.'

The smuggler fearing his prize would escape, through the ignorance, pride, and obstinacy of this country justice, approached his worship, and in a whisper which was overheard by all the company, assured him he had indubitable reason to believe the foreigner was no other than the Pretender's eldest son. At mention of this formidable name, every individual of the audience started, with signs of terror and amazement. The justice dropped his pipe, recoiled upon his chair, and looking most ridiculously aghast, exclaimed, 'Seize him in the name of God and his majesty King George! has he got no secret arms about him?'

Fathom being thus informed of the suspicion under which he stood, could not help smiling at the eagerness with

which the spectators flew upon him; and suffered himself to be searched with great composure, well knowing they would find no moveables about his person, but such as, upon examination, would turn to his account; he, therefore, very calmly presented to the magistrate his purse, and a small box that contained his jewels, and in the French language desired they might be preserved from the hands of the mob. This request was interpreted by the accuser, who, at the same time, laid claim to the booty; the justice took charge of the deposit, and one of his neighbours having undertaken the office of clerk, he proceeded to the examination of the culprit, whose papers were by this time laid on the table before him. 'Stranger,' said he, 'you stand charged with being son of the Pretender to these realms: what have you to say in your own defence?' Our hero assured him, in the French language, that he was falsely impeached, and demanded justice on the accuser, who, without the least reason, had made such a malicious attack upon the life and honour of an innocent gentleman.

The smuggler, instead of acting the part of a faithful interpreter, told his worship that the prisoner's answer was no more than a simple denial, which every felon would make who had nothing else to plead in his own behalf; and that this alone was a strong presumption of his guilt; because, if he was not really the person they suspected him to be, the thing would speak for itself; for, if he was not the young Pretender, who then was he. This argument had great weight with the justice; who, assuming a very important aspect, observed, 'Very true, friend—if you are not the Pretender, in the name of God who are you?—One may see with half an eye, that he is no better than a promiscuous fellow.'

Ferdinand now began to repent of having pretended ignorance of the English language, as he found himself at the mercy of a rascal, who put a false gloss upon all his words; and addressed himself to the audience successively in French, High Dutch, Italian, and Hungarian Latin, desiring to know if any person present understood any of these tongues, that his answers might be honestly explained to the bench. But he might have accosted them in Chinese

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with the same success: there was not one person present tolerably versed in his mother tongue, much less acquainted with any foreign language, except the wine-merchant; who, incensed at this appeal, which he considered as an affront to his integrity, gave the judge to understand, that the delinquent, instead of speaking to the purpose, contumaciously insulted his authority, in sundry foreign lingo's, which, he apprehended, was an additional proof of his being the chevalier's son, inasmuch as no person would take the pains to learn such a variety of gibberish, except with some sinister intent.

This annotation was not lost upon the squire, who was too jealous of the honour of his office, to overlook such a flagrant instance of contempt. His eyes glistened, his cheeks were inflated with rage. 'The case is plain,' said he; 'having nothing of signification to offer in his own favour, he grows refractory, and abuses the court in his base Roman catholic jargon!—But I'll let you know, for all you pretend to be a prince, you are no better than an outlawed vagrant; and I'll shew you what a thing you are, when you come in *composition* with an English justice like me, who have more than once *extinguished* myself in the service of my country. As nothing else accrues, your purse, black box, and papers, shall be sealed up before witnesses, and sent by express to one of his majesty's secretaries of state; and as for yourself, I will apply to the military at Canterbury, for a guard to conduct you to London.'

This was a very unwelcome declaration to our adventurer; who was on the point of haranguing the justice and spectators in their own language, when he was relieved from the necessity of taking that step, by the interposition of a young nobleman just arrived at the inn; who, being informed of this strange examination, entered the court, and at first sight of the prisoner, assured the justice he was imposed upon; for, that he himself had often seen the young Pretender in Paris, and that there was no kind of resemblance between that adventurer and the person now before him. The accuser was not a little mortified at his lordship's affirmation, which met with all due regard from the bench; though the magistrate took notice, that

granting the prisoner was not the young chevalier himself, it was highly probable he was an emissary of that house, as he could give no satisfactory account of himself, and was possessed of things of such value as no honest man would expose to the accidents of the road.

Fathom having thus found an interpreter, who signified to him in the French tongue the doubts of the justice, told his lordship, that he was a gentleman of a noble house in Germany, who for certain reasons had come abroad incognito, with a view to see the world; and that, although the letters they had seized would prove the truth of that assertion, he should be loth to expose his private concerns to the knowledge of strangers, if he could possibly be released without that mortification. The young nobleman explained his desire to the court; but his own curiosity being interested, observed at the same time, that the justice could not be said to have discharged the duty of his station, until he should have examined every circumstance relating to the prisoner: upon which remonstrance, he was requested by the bench to peruse the papers, and accordingly communicated the substance of one letter to this effect.

'MY DEAR SON,

'THOUGH I am far from approving the rash step you have taken in withdrawing yourself from your father's house, in order to avoid an engagement, which would have been equally honourable and advantageous to your family; I cannot so far suppress my affection, as to bear the thought of your undergoing those hardships, which, for your disobedience, you deserve to suffer. I have, therefore, without the knowledge of your father, sent the bearer to attend you in your peregrinations; his fidelity you know hath been tried in a long course of service, and I have entrusted to his care, for your use, a purse of two hundred ducats, and a box of jewels to the value of twice that sum, which, though not sufficient to support an equipage suitable to your birth, will, at least, for some time, preserve you from the importunities of want. When you are dutiful enough to explain your designs and situation, you may expect farther

‘ther indulgence from your too tender
‘and disconsolate mother,

‘THE COUNTESS OF FATHOM.’

This letter, which, as well as the others, our hero had forged for the purpose, effectually answered his intent, in throwing dust in the eyes and understanding of the spectators, who now regarded the prisoner with looks of respectful remorse, as a man of quality who had been falsely accused: his lordship, to make a parade of his own politeness and importance, assured the bench he was no stranger to the family of the Fathoms, and with a compliment, gave Ferdinand to understand he had formerly seen him at Versailles. There being no longer room for suspicion, the justice ordered our adventurer to be set at liberty, and even invited him to be seated, with an apology for the rude manner in which he had been treated, owing to the misinformation of the accuser, who was threatened with the stocks for his malice and presumption.

But this was not the only triumph our hero obtained over the wine-merchant. Maurice was no sooner unfettered, than advancing into the middle of the room; ‘My lord,’ said he, addressing himself in French to his master’s deliverer, ‘since you have been so generous as to protect a noble stranger from the danger of such a false accusation, I hope you will still lay an additional obligation upon the count, by retorting the vengeance of the law upon his perfidious accuser, whom I know to be a trader in those articles of merchandize which are prohibited by the ordinances of this nation. I have seen him lately at Boulogne, and am perfectly well acquainted with some persons who have supplied him with French lace and embroidery; and, as a proof of what I alledge, I desire you will order him and this barber, who is his under-strapper, to be examined on the spot.’

This charge, which was immediately explained to the bench, yielded extraordinary satisfaction to the spectators, one of whom being an officer of the customs, forthwith began to exercise his function upon the unlucky perruquier, who, being stripped of his upper garments, and even of his shirt, appeared like the mummy of an Egyptian king,

most curiously rolled up in bandages of rich, figured gold shalloon, that covered the skirts of four embroidered waistcoats. The merchant seeing his expectation so unhappily reversed, made an effort to retire with the most rueful aspect; but was prevented by the officer, who demanded the interposition of the civil power, that he might undergo the same examination to which the other had been subjected. He was accordingly rifled without loss of time, and the enquiry proved well worth the care of him who made it; for a considerable booty of the same sort of merchandize was found in his boots, breeches, hat, and between the buckram and lining of his furtout. Yet, not contented with this prize, the experienced spoiler proceeded to search his baggage, and perceiving a false bottom in his portmanteau, detected beneath it a valuable accession to the plunder he had already obtained.

CHAP. XXX.

THE SINGULAR MANNER OF FATHOM’S ATTACK AND TRIUMPH OVER THE VIRTUE OF THE FAIR ELENOR.

PROPER cognizance being thus taken of these contraband effects, and the informer furnished with a certificate by which he was intitled to a share of the seizure, the coachman summoned his passengers to the carriage; the purse and jewels were restored to Count Fathom, who thanked the justice, and his lordship in particular, for the candour and hospitality with which he had been treated, and resumed his place in the vehicle, amidst the congratulations of all his fellow-travellers, except the two forlorn smugglers; who, instead of re-imbarking in the coach, thought proper to remain at the inn, with a view to mitigate, if possible, the severity of their misfortune.

Among those who felicitated Fathom upon the issue of this adventure, the young maiden seemed to express the most sensible pleasure at that event. The artful language of his eyes had raised in her breast certain fluttering emotions, before she knew the value of her conquest; but now that his rank and condition were discovered, these

transports were increased by the ideas of vanity and ambition, which are mingled with the first seeds of every female constitution. The belief of having captivated the heart of a man who could raise her to the rank and dignity of a countess, produced such agreeable sensations in her fancy, that her eyes shone with unusual lustre, and a continual smile played in dimples on her rosy cheeks; so that her attractions, though not powerful enough to engage the affection, were yet sufficient to inflame the desire of our adventurer, who very honestly marked her chastity for prey to his voluptuous passion. Had she been well seasoned with knowledge and experience, and compleatly armed with caution against the artifice and villainy of man, her virtue might not have been able to withstand the engines of such an assailant, considering the dangerous opportunities to which she was necessarily exposed: how easy then must his victory have been over an innocent, unsuspecting country damsel, flushed with the warmth of youth, and an utter stranger to the ways of life!

While Obadiah, therefore, and his plump companion were engaged in conversation on the strange incidents which had passed, Fathom acted a very expressive pantomime with this fair buxom nymph, who comprehended his meaning with surprizing facility, and was at so little pains to conceal the pleasure she took in this kind of intercourse, that several warm squeezes were interchanged between her and her lover, before they arrived at Rochester, where they proposed to dine. It was during this period, he learned from the answers she made to the inquisitive quaker, that her sole dependance was upon a relation, to whom she had a letter, and that she was a perfect stranger in the great city; circumstances on which he soon formed the project of her ruin.

Upon their arrival at the Black Bull, he, for the first time, found himself alone with his Amanda whose name was Elenor, their fellow travellers being elsewhere employed about their own concerns; and, unwilling to lose the precious opportunity, he began to act the part of a very importunate lover, which he conceived to be a proper sequel to the prelude which had been performed in the coach. The freedoms that she, out of pure simplicity and

good-humour, permitted him to take with her hand, and even her rosy lips, encouraged him to practise other familiarities upon her fair bosom, which scandalized her virtue so much, that in spite of the passion she had begun to indulge in his behalf, she rejected his advances with all the marks of anger and disdain; and he found it necessary to appease the storm he had raised, by the most respectful and submissive demeanour; resolving to change his operations, and carry on his attacks so as to make her yield at discretion, without alarming her religion or pride. Accordingly, when the bill was called after dinner, he took particular notice of her behaviour, and perceiving her pull out a large leathern purse that contained her money, reconnoitered the pocket in which it was deposited, and while they sat close to each other in the carriage, conveyed it with admirable dexterity into an hole in the cushion. Whether the corpulent couple, who sat opposite to these lovers, had entered into an amorous engagement at the inn, or were severally induced by other motives, is uncertain; but, sure it is, both left the coach on that part of the road which lies nearest to Gravesend, and bade adieu to the other pair, on pretence of having urgent business at that place.

Ferdinand, not a little pleased at their departure, renewed his most pathetick expressions of love, and sung several French songs on that tender subject, which seemed to thrill to the soul of his beauteous Helen. While the driver halted at Dartford to water his horses, she was smit with the appearance of some cheesecakes, which were presented by the landlady of the house, and having bargained for two or three, put her hand in her pocket, in order to pay for the purchase; but what was her astonishment, when after having rummaged her equipage, she understood her whole fortune was lost! This mishap was by a loud shriek announced to our hero, who affected infinite amazement and concern; and no sooner learned the cause of her affliction, than he presented her with his own purse, from which he, in emphatick dumb-show, begged she would indemnify herself for the damage she had sustained. Although this kind proffer was some alleviation of her misfortune, she did not fail to pour forth a most piteous lamentation, importing that

that she had not only lost all her money, amounting to five pounds, but also her letter of recommendation, upon which she had altogether relied for present employment.

The vehicle was minutely searched from top to bottom by herself and our adventurer, assisted by Maurice and the coachman; who finding their inquiry ineffectual, did not scruple to declare his suspicion of the two fat turtles who had deserted the coach in such an abrupt manner. In a word, he rendered this conjecture so plausible, by wresting the circumstances of their behaviour and retreat, that poor Elenor implicitly believed they were the thieves by whom she had suffered; and was prevailed upon to accept the proffered assistance of the generous count, who seeing her very much disordered by this mischance, insisted upon her drinking a large glass of Canary to quiet the perturbation of her spirits. This is a season which of all others is the most propitious to the attempts of an artful lover; and justifies the metaphorical maxim of fishing in troubled waters. There is an affinity and short transition betwixt all the violent passions that agitate the human mind: they are all false perspectives, which, though they magnify, yet perplex and render indistinct every object which they represent; and flattery is never so successfully administered, as to those who know they stand in need of friendship, assent, and approbation.

The cordial she swallowed, far from calming, increased the disturbance of her thoughts, and produced an intoxication; during which she talked in an incoherent strain, laughed and wept by turns, and acted other extravagances, which are known to be symptoms of the hysterical affection. Fathom, though an utter stranger to the sentiments of honour, pity, and remorse, would not perpetrate his vicious purpose, though favoured by the delirium his villainy had intailed upon this unfortunate young maiden; because his appetite demanded a more perfect sacrifice than that which she could yield in her present deplorable situation, when her will must have been altogether unconcerned in his success. Determined, therefore, to make a conquest of her virtue, before he would take possession of her person, he mimicked that compassion and benevolence, which his heart had never felt,

and when the coach arrived at London, not only discharged what she owed for her place, but likewise procured for her an apartment in the house to which he himself had been directed for lodgings, and even hired a nurse to attend her during a severe fever, which was the consequence of her disappointment and despondence. Indeed, she was supplied with all necessaries by the generosity of this noble count; who, for the interest of his passion, and the honour of his name, was resolved to extend his charity to the last farthing of her own money, which he had been wise enough to secure for this purpose.

Her youth soon got the better of her distemper, and when she understood her obligations to the count, who did not fail to attend her in person with great tenderness, her heart, which had been before prepossessed in his favour, now glowed with all the warmth of gratitude, esteem, and affection. She knew herself in a strange place, destitute of all resource but in his generosity: she loved his person, she was dazzled by his rank; and he knew so well how to improve the opportunities and advantages he derived from her unhappy situation, that he gradually proceeded in sapping, from one degree of intimacy to another, until all the bulwarks of her chastity were undermined, and she submitted to his desire, not with the reluctance of a vanquished people, but with all the transports of a joyful city, that opens its gates to receive a darling prince returned from conquest; for by this time he had artfully concentrated and kindled up all the inflammable ingredients of her constitution, and she now looked back upon the virtuous principles of her education as upon a disagreeable and tedious dream, from which she had waked to the fruition of never-fading joy.

CHAP. XXXI.

HE BY ACCIDENT ENCOUNTERS
HIS OLD FRIEND, WITH WHOM
HE HOLDS A CONFERENCE, AND
RENEWES A TREATY.

OUR hero having thus provided himself with a proper subject for his hours of dalliance, thought it was now high time to study the ground which he had pitched upon for the scene
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of his exploits; and with that view made several excursions to different parts of the town, where there was ought of entertainment or instruction to be found: yet he always, on these occasions, appeared in an obscure ordinary dress, in order to avoid singularity, and never went twice to the same coffee-house, that his person might not be afterwards known, in case he should shine forth to the publick in a superior sphere. On his return from one of these expeditions, while he was passing through Ludgate, his eyes were suddenly encountered by the apparition of his old friend the Tyroleze, who perceiving himself fairly caught in the toil, made a virtue of necessity, and running up to our adventurer with an aspect of eagerness and joy, clasped him in his arms, as some dear friend whom he had casually found after a most tedious and disagreeable separation.

Fathom, whose genius never failed him in such emergencies, far from receiving these advances with the threats and reproaches which the other had deserved at his hands, returned the salute with equal warmth, and was really overjoyed at meeting with a person who might one way or other make amends for the perfidy of his former conduct. The Tyroleze, whose name was Ratchkali, pleased with his reception, proposed they should adjourn to the next tavern, in which they had no sooner taken possession of an apartment, than he addressed himself to his old companion in these words.

‘ Mr. Fathom, by your frank and obliging manner of treating a man who hath done you wrong, I am more and more confirmed in my opinion of your sagacity, which I have often considered with admiration: I will not, therefore, attempt to make an apology for my conduct at our last parting; but only assure you that this meeting may turn out to our mutual advantage, if we now re enter into an unreserved union, the ties of which we will soon find it our interest and inclination to preserve. For my own part, as my judgment is ripened by experience, so are my sentiments changed since our last association. I have seen many a rich harvest lost for want of a fellow-labourer in the vineyard; and I have more than once fallen a sacrifice to a combination, which I

could have resisted with the help of one able auxiliary. Indeed, I might prove what I alledge by mathematical demonstration; and I believe nobody will pretend to deny, that two heads are better than one in all cases that require discernment and deliberation.’

Ferdinand could not help owning the sanity of his observations, and forthwith acquiesced in his proposal of the new alliance; desiring to know the character in which he acted on the English stage, and the scheme he would offer for their mutual emolument: at the same time he resolved within himself to keep such a strict eye over his future actions, as would frustrate any design he might hereafter harbour, of repeating the prank he had so successfully played upon him in their journey from the banks of the Rhine.

‘ Having quitted you at Bar-le-duc,’ resumed the Tyroleze, ‘ I travelled without ceasing, until I arrived at Franckfort upon the Maine, where I assumed the character of a French chevalier, and struck some masterly strokes, which you yourself would not have deemed unworthy of your invention; and my success was the more agreeable, as my operations were chiefly carried on against the enemies of our religion; but my prosperity was not of long duration. Seeing they could not foil me at my own weapons, they formed a damned conspiracy, by which I not only lost all the fruits of my industry, but likewise ran the most imminent hazard of my life. I had ordered some of those jewels which I had borrowed of my good friend Fathom, to be new set in a fashionable taste, and soon after had an opportunity to sell one of these at a great advantage to one of the fraternity, who offered an extraordinary price for the stone, on purpose to effect my ruin. In less than four and twenty hours after this bargain, I was arrested by the officers of justice, upon the oath of the purchaser, who undertook to prove me guilty of a fraud, in selling a Saxon pebble for a real diamond; and this accusation was actually true, for the change had been artfully put upon me by the jeweller, who was himself engaged in the conspiracy.

‘ Had my conscience been clear of any other impeachment, perhaps I should have rested my cause upon the equity

equity and protection of the law; but I foresaw that the trial would introduce an inquiry, to which I was not at all ambitious of submitting, and therefore was fain to compromise the affair, at the price of almost my whole fortune. Yet this accommodation was not made so secretly but that my character was blasted, and my credit overthrown; so that I was fain to relinquish my occasional equipage, and hire myself as journeyman to a lapidary, an employment which I had exercised in my youth. In this obscure station I laboured with great assiduity, until I made myself perfect in the knowledge of stones, as well as in the different methods of setting them off to the best advantage; and having, by dint of industry and address, got possession of a small parcel, set out for this kingdom, in which I happily arrived about four months ago; and surely England is the paradise of artists of our profession!

One would imagine, that nature had created the inhabitants for the support and enjoyment of adventurers like you and me. Not that these islanders open the arms of hospitality to all foreigners without distinction: on the contrary, they inherit from their fathers an unreasonable prejudice against all nations under the sun; and when an Englishman happens to quarrel with a stranger, the first term of reproach he uses is the name of his antagonist's country, characterized by some opprobrious epithet; such as a chattering Frenchman, an Italian ape, a German hog, and a beastly Dutchman; nay, their national prepossession is maintained even against those people with whom they are united under the same laws and government; for nothing is more common than to hear them exclaim against their fellow-subjects in the expressions of a beggarly Scot, and an impudent Irish bog-trotter. Yet this very prejudice will never fail to turn to the account of every stranger possessed of ordinary talents; for he will always find opportunities of conversing with them in coffee-houses, and places of public resort, in spite of their professed reserve; which, by the bye, is so extraordinary, that I know some people who have lived twenty years in the same house, without exchanging one

word with their next-door neighbours; yet, provided he can talk sensibly, and preserve the deportment of a sober gentleman in those occasional conversations, his behaviour will be the more remarkably pleasing, as it will agreeably disappoint the expectation of the person who had entertained notions to his prejudice. When a foreigner has once crossed this bar, which perpetually occurs, he sails without farther difficulty into the harbour of an Englishman's good-will; for the pique is neither personal nor rancorous, but rather contemptuous and national; so that while he despises a people in the lump, an individual of that very community may be one of his chief favourites.

The English are in general upright and honest, therefore unsuspecting and credulous: they are too much engrossed with their own business, to pry into the conduct of their neighbours, and too indifferent, in point of disposition, to interest themselves in what they conceive to be foreign to their own concerns. They are wealthy and mercantile, of consequence liberal and adventurous; and so well disposed to take a man's own word for his importance, that they suffer themselves to be preyed upon by such a bungling set of impostors, as would starve for lack of address in any other country under the sun. This being a true sketch of the British character, so far as I have been able to observe and learn, you will easily comprehend the profits that may be extracted from it, by virtue of those arts in which you so eminently excel; *the great, the unbounded prospect lies before me!* Indeed, I look upon this opulent kingdom, as a wide and fertile common, on which we adventurers may range for prey, without let or molestation: for so jealous are the natives of their liberty, that they will not bear the restraint of necessary police; and an able artist may enrich himself with their spoils, without running any risk of attracting the notice of the magistrate, or incurring the least penalty of the law.

In a word, this metropolis is a vast masquerade, in which a man of stratagem may wear a thousand different disguises, without danger of detection. There is a variety of shapes in which

we

we knights of industry make our appearance in London. One glides into a nobleman's house in the capacity of a valet de chambre, and in a few months leads the whole family by the nose. Another exhibits himself to the publick as an empirick, or operator for the teeth; and by dint of assurance and affidavits, bearing testimony to wonderful cures that never were performed, whirls himself into his chariot, and lays the town under contribution. A third professes the composition of musick, as well as the performance; and by means of a few *capriccios* on the violin, properly introduced, wriggles himself into the management of private and publick concerts. And a fourth breaks forth at once in all the splendor of a gay equipage, under the title and denomination of a foreign count. Not to mention those inferior projectors, who assume the characters of dancers, fencing-masters, and French ushers; or by renouncing their religion, seek to obtain a provision for life.

Either of these parts will turn to the account of an able actor; and as you are equally qualified for all, you may chuse that which is most suitable to your own inclination: though, in my opinion, you was designed by Nature to shine in the great world, which, after all, is the most ample field for men of genius; because the game is deeper, and people of fashion being for the most part more ignorant, indolent, vain, and capricious, than their inferiors, are of consequence more easily deceived; besides, their morals sit generally so loose about them, that when a gentleman of our fraternity is discovered in the exercise of his profession, their contempt of his skill is the only disgrace he incurs.

Our hero was so well pleased with this picture, that he longed to peruse the original; and before these two friends parted, they settled all the operations of the campaign. Ratchkali, that same evening, hired magnificent lodgings for Count Fathom, in the court end of the town; and furnished his wardrobe and liveries from the spoils of Monmouth Street: he likewise enlisted another footman and valet de chambre into his service; and sent to the apartments divers large trunks, supposed to be filled with

the baggage of this foreign nobleman, though in reality they contained little else than common lumber.

Next day our adventurer took possession of his new habitation, after having left to his friend and associate the task of dismissing the unfortunate Eleanor; who was so shocked at the unexpected message, that she fainted away: and when she recovered the use of her senses, so well as to reflect upon her forlorn condition, she was seized with the most violent transports of grief and dismay, by which her brain was disordered to such a degree, that she grew furious and distracted; and was, by the advice and assistance of the Tyroleze, conveyed into the hospital of Bethlem; where we shall leave her for the present, happily bereft of her reason.

C H A P. XXXII:

HE APPEARS IN THE GREAT WORLD
WITH UNIVERSAL APPLAUSE AND
ADMIRATION.

MEANWHILE Fathom and his engine were busied in completing his equipage, so that in a few days he had procured a very gay chariot, adorned with painting, gilding, and a coat of arms according to his own fancy and direction. The first use he made of this vehicle, was that of visiting the young nobleman from whom he had received such important civilities on the road, in consequence of an invitation at parting, by which he learned his title and the place of his abode in London.

His lordship was not only pleased, but proud to see such a stranger at his gate, and entertained him with excess of complaisance and hospitality; inasmuch, that by his means our hero soon became acquainted with the whole circle of polite company, by whom he was carested for his insinuating manners and agreeable conversation. He had thought proper to tell the nobleman, at their first interview in town, that his reasons for concealing his knowledge of the English tongue were now removed, and that he would no longer deny himself the pleasure of speaking a language which had been always musick to his ear. He had also thanked his lordship for his generous interposition at the inn, which was an instance of that generos-
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sity and true politeness, which are engrossed by the English people, who leave nought to other nations but the mere shadow of these virtues.

A testimony like this, from the mouth of such a noble stranger, won the heart of the peer, who professed a friendship for him on the spot, and undertook to see justice done to his lacquey, who in a short time was gratified with a share of the seizure which had been made upon his information, amounting to fifty or sixty pounds.

Ferdinand put not forth the whole strength of his accomplishments at once, but contrived to spring a new mine of qualification every day, to the surprize and admiration of all his acquaintance. He was gifted with a sort of elocution, much more specious than solid, and spoke on every subject that occurred in conversation, with that familiarity and ease, which, one would think, could only be acquired by long study and application. This plausibility and confidence are faculties really inherent from nature, and effectually serve the possessor, in lieu of that learning which is not to be obtained without infinite toil and perseverance: the most superficial tincture of the arts and sciences in such a juggler, is sufficient to dazzle the understanding of half mankind; and if managed with circumspection, will enable him even to spend his life among the literati, without once forfeiting the character of a connoisseur.

Our hero was perfectly master of this legerdemain; which he carried to such a pitch of assurance, as to declare in the midst of a mathematical assembly, that he intended to gratify the publick with a full confutation of Sir Isaac Newton's philosophy; to the nature of which he was as much a stranger as the most savage Hottentot in Africk. His pretensions to profound and universal knowledge, were supported not only by this kind of presumption, but also by the facility with which he spoke so many different languages, and the shrewd remarks he had made in the course of his travels and observation.

Among politicians, he settled the balance of power upon a certain footing, by dint of ingenious schemes, which he had contrived for the welfare of Europe. With officers, he reformed the art of war, with improvements which had occurred to his reflection while he

was engaged in a military life. He sometimes held forth upon painting, like a member of the *Dilettanti* club. The theory of musick was a theme upon which he seemed to expatiate with particular pleasure. In the provinces of love and gallantry, he was a perfect Oroondates. He possessed a most agreeable manner of telling entertaining stories, of which he had a large collection. He sung with great melody and taste; and played upon the violin with surprizing execution. To these qualifications, let us add his affability and pliant disposition, and then the reader will not wonder that he was looked upon as the pattern of human perfection, and his acquaintance courted accordingly.

While he thus captivated the favour and affection of the English nobility, he did not neglect to take other measures in behalf of the partnership to which he had subscribed. The adventure with the two squires at Paris, had weakened his appetite for play, which was not at all restored by the observations he had made in London, where the art of gaming is reduced into a regular system, and it's professors so laudably devoted to the discharge of their functions, as to observe the most temperate regimen, lest their invention should be impaired by the fatigue of watching or exercise, and their ideas disturbed, by the fumes of indigestion. No Indian brachman could live more abstemious than two of the pack, who hunted in couple, and kennelled in the upper apartments of the hotel in which our adventurer lived: they abstained from animal food with the abhorrence of Pythagoreans; their drink was the pure, simple element; they were vomited once a week, took physick or a clyster every third day; spent the forenoon in algebraical calculations; and slept from four o'clock till midnight, that they might then take the field with that cool serenity, which is the effect of refreshment and repose.

These were terms upon which our hero would not risk his fortune; he was too much addicted to pleasure to forego every other enjoyment but that of amassing; and did not so much depend upon his dexterity in play, as upon his talent of insinuation, which by this time had succeeded so far beyond his expectation, that he began to indulge the hope of enslaving the heart of some rich heiress, whose

whose fortune would at once raise him above all dependance. Indeed, no man ever set out with a fairer prospect on such an expedition; for he had found means to render himself so agreeable to the fair-sex, that, like the boxes of the playhouse, during the representation of a new performance, his company was often bespoke for a series of weeks; and no lady, whether widow, wife, or maiden, ever mentioned his name without some epithet of esteem or affection; such as, *the dear count! the charming man! the nonpareil! or the angel!*

While he thus shone in the zenith of admiration, it is not to be doubted that he could have melted some wealthy dowager or opulent ward: but being an enemy to all precipitate engagements, he resolved to act with great care and deliberation in an affair of such importance, especially as he did not find himself hurried by the importunities of want: for, since his arrival in England, he had rather increased than exhausted his finances, by methods equally certain and secure. In a word, he, with the assistance of Ratchkali, carried on a traffick which yielded great profits, without subjecting the trader to the least loss or inconvenience. Fathom, for example, wore upon his finger a large brilliant, which he played to such advantage one night, at a certain nobleman's house, where he was prevailed upon to entertain the company with a solo on the violin, that every body present took notice of it's uncommon lustre; and it was handed about for the perusal of every individual. The water and the workmanship were universally admired; and one among the rest, having expressed a desire of knowing the value of such a jewel, the count seized that opportunity of entertaining them with a learned disquisition into the nature of stones: this introduced the history of the diamond in question, which he said had been purchased of an Indian trader of Fort St. George, at an under price; so that the present proprietor could afford to sell it at a very reasonable rate; and concluded with telling the company, that for his own part, he had been importuned to wear it by the jeweller, who imagined it would have a better chance for attracting a purchaser on his finger, than while it remained in his own custody.

This declaration was no sooner made,

than a certain lady of quality bespoke the refuse of the jewel, and desired Ferdinand to send the owner next day to her house; where he accordingly waited upon her ladyship with the ring, for which he received one hundred and fifty guineas, two thirds of the sum being clear gain, and equally divided betwixt the associates. Nor was this bargain such as reflected dishonour upon the lady's taste, or could be productive of ill consequences to the merchant: for the method of estimating diamonds is altogether arbitrary; and Ratchkali, who was an exquisite lapidary, had set it in such a manner, as would have imposed upon any ordinary jeweller. By these means of introduction, the Tyroleze soon monopolized the custom of a great many noble families, upon which he levied large contributions, without incurring the least suspicion of deceit: he every day, out of pure esteem and gratitude for the honour of their commands, entertained them with the sight of some new trinket, which he was never permitted to carry home unfold; and from the profits of each job, a tax was raised for the benefit of our adventurer.

Yet his indultos were not confined to the article of jewels, which constituted only one part of his revenue. By the industry of his understrapper, he procured a number of old crazy fiddles, which were thrown aside as lumber, upon which he counterfeited the Cremona mark, and otherwise cooked them up with great dexterity; so that when he had occasion to regale the lovers of musick, he would send for one of these vamped instruments, and extract from it such tones as quite ravished the hearers; among whom there was always some conceited pretender, who spoke in raptures of the violin, and gave our hero an opportunity of launching out in it's praise, and declaring it was the best Cremona he had ever touched. This encomium never failed to inflame the desires of the audience; to some of whom he was generous enough to part with it at prime cost, that is, for twenty or thirty guineas clear profit; for he was often able to oblige his friends in this manner, because, being an eminent connoisseur, his countenance was solicited by all the musicians who wanted to dispose of such moveables.

Nor did he neglect the other resources
of

of a skilful virtuoso. Every auction afforded some picture, in which, though it had been overlooked by the ignorance of the times, he recognized the stile of a great master, and made a merit of recommending it to some noble friend. This commerce he likewise extended to medals, bronzes, busts, intaglios, and old china, and kept divers artificers continually employed in making antiques for the English nobility. Thus he went on with such rapidity of success in all his endeavours, that he himself was astonished at the infatuation he had produced. Nothing was so wretched among the productions of art, that he could not impose upon the world as a capital performance; and so fascinated were the eyes of his admirers, he could easily have persuaded them that a barber's basin was an Etrurian patera, and the cover of a copper pot no other than the shield of Ancus Martius. In short, it was become so fashionable to consult the count in every thing relating to taste and politeness, that not a plan was drawn, nor even a house furnished, without his advice and approbation; nay, to such a degree did his reputation in these matters excel, that a particular pattern of paper-hangings was known by the name of Fathom; and his hall was every morning crowded with upholsterers, and other tradesmen, who came by order of their employers, to learn his choice, and take his directions.

The character and influence he thus acquired, he took care to maintain with the utmost assiduity and circumspection. He never failed to appear the chief personage at all publick diversions and private assemblies; not only in conversation and dress, but also in the article of dancing, in which he outstripped all his fellows, as far as in every other genteel accomplishment.

C H A P. XXXIII.

HE ATTRACTS THE ENVY AND ILL OFFICES OF THE MINOR KNIGHTS OF HIS OWN ORDER, OVER WHOM HE OBTAINS A COMPLETE VICTORY.

SUCH a pre-eminence could not be enjoyed without exciting the malevolence of envy and detraction, in the

propagation of which, none were so industrious as the brethren of his own order, who had, like him, made a descent upon this island, and could not, without repining, see the whole harvest in the hands of one man; who, with equal art and discretion, avoided all intercourse with their society. In vain they strove to discover his pedigree, and detect the particular circumstances of his life and conversation; all their enquiries were baffled by the obscurity of his origin, and that solitary scheme which he had adopted in the beginning of his career. The whole fruit of their investigation, amounted to no more than a certainty that there was no family of any consideration in Europe, known by the denomination of Fathom; and this discovery they did not fail to divulge for the benefit of our adventurer, who had by this time taken such firm root in the favour of the great, as to set all those little arts at defiance; and when the report reached his ear, actually made his friends merry with the conjectures which had been circulated at his expence.

His adversaries finding themselves disappointed in this effort, held a consultation to devise other measures against him, and came to a resolution of ending him by the sword, or rather of expelling him from the kingdom, by the fear of death, which they hoped he had not courage enough to resist, because his deportment had been always remarkably mild and pacifick. It was upon this supposition, that they left to the determination of the dice the choice of the person who should execute their plan; and the lot falling upon a Swiss, who from the station of a foot-soldier in the Dutch service, out of which he had been drummed for theft, had erected himself into the rank of a self-created chevalier; this hero fortified himself with a double dose of brandy, and betook himself to a certain noted coffee-house, with an intent to affront Count Fathom in publick.

He was lucky enough to find our adventurer sitting at a table in conversation with some persons of the first rank; upon which he seated himself in the next box, and after having intruded himself into their discourse, which happened to turn upon the politicks of some German courts; 'Count,' said he to Ferdinand, in a very abrupt and dis-

agreeable manner of address, 'I was last night in company with some gentlemen, among whom a dispute happened about the place of your nativity; pray, what country are you of?'—'Sir,' answered the other, with great politeness, 'I at present have the honour to be of England.'—'Oho!' replied the chevalier, 'I ask your pardon! that is to say, you are incognito! Some people may find it convenient to keep themselves in that situation.'—'True,' said the count, 'but some people are too well known to enjoy that privilege.' The Swiss being a little disconcerted at this repartee, which extracted a smile from the audience; after some pause, observed, that persons of a certain class, had good reason to drop the remembrance of what they have been; but a good citizen will not forget his country or former condition. 'And a bad citizen,' saith Fathom, 'cannot if he would, provided he has met with his deserts; a sharper may as well forget the shape of a die, or a discarded soldier the sound of a drum.'

As the chevalier's character and story were not unknown, this application raised a universal laugh at his expence, which provoked him to such a degree, that starting up, he swore Fathom could not have mentioned any object in nature that he himself resembled so much as a drum, which was exactly typified by his emptiness and sound; with this difference, however, that a drum was never noisy till beaten, whereas the count would never be quiet until he should have undergone the same discipline. So saying, he laid his hand upon his sword with a menacing look, and walked out as if in expectation of being followed by our adventurer, who suffered himself to be detained by the company, and very calmly took notice, that his antagonist would not be ill pleased at their interposition. Perhaps he would not have comported himself with such ease and deliberation, had not he made such remarks upon the disposition of the chevalier, as convinced him of his own safety. He had perceived a perplexity and perturbation in the countenance of the Swiss, when he first entered the coffee-room; his blunt and precipitate way of accosting him, seemed to denote confusion and compulsion; and, in the midst of his ferocity, this accurate observer discerned

the trepidation of fear. By the help of these signs, his sagacity soon comprehended the nature of his schemes, and prepared accordingly for a formal defiance.

His conjecture was verified next morning by a visit from the chevalier, who taking it for granted that Fathom would not face an adversary in the field, because he had not followed him from the coffee-house, went to his lodgings with great confidence, and demanded to see the count upon an affair that would admit of no delay. Maurice, according to his instructions, told him that his master was gone out, but desired he would have the goodness to repose himself in a parlour, till the count's return, which he expected every moment. Ferdinand, who had taken post in a proper place for observation, seeing his antagonist fairly admitted, took the same road, and appearing before him, wrapped up in a long Spanish cloak, desired to know what had procured him the honour of such an early visit. The Swiss, raising his voice to conceal his agitation, explained his errand, in demanding reparation for the injury his honour had sustained the preceding day, in that odious allusion to a scandalous report which had been raised by the malice of his enemies; and insisted in a very imperious stile, upon his attending him forthwith to the nursery in Hyde-Park. 'Have a little patience,' said our adventurer, with great composure, 'and I will do myself the pleasure to wait upon you in a few moments.'

With these words he rung the bell, and calling for a basin of water, laid aside his cloak, and displayed himself in his shirt, with a sword in his right-hand, which was all over besmeared with recent blood, as if he had just come from the slaughter of a foe. This phenomenon made such an impression upon the astonished chevalier, already discomposed by the resolute behaviour of the count, that he became jaundiced with terror and dismay, and while his teeth chattered in his head, told our hero he had hoped from his known politeness, to have found him ready to acknowledge an injury which might have been the effect of anger or misapprehension, in which case the affair might have been compromised to their mutual satisfaction, without proceeding to those extremities, which, among men
or

of honour, are always accounted the last resource. To this representation, Ferdinand answered, that the affair had been of the chevalier's own seeking, inasmuch as he had intruded himself into his company, and treated him with the most insolent and unprovoked abuse, which plainly flowed from a premeditated design against his honour and reputation: he therefore, far from being disposed to own himself in the wrong, would not even accept of a publick acknowledgment from him the aggressor, whom he looked upon as an infamous sharper, and was resolved to chastise accordingly.

Here the conversation was interrupted by the arrival of a person who was brought to the door in a chair, and conducted into another apartment, from which a message was brought to the count, importing, that the stranger desired to speak with him, upon business of the last importance. Fathom having chid the servant for admitting people without his order, desired the Swiss to excuse him for a minute longer, and went into the next room; from whence the following dialogue was overheard by this challenger. 'Count,' said the stranger, 'you are not ignorant of my pretensions to the heart of that young lady, at whose house I met you yesterday; therefore, you cannot be surprized when I declare myself displeased with your visits and behaviour to my mistress, and demand that you will instantly promise to drop the correspondence.'—'Else what follows?' answered Ferdinand, with a cool and temperate voice. 'My resentment and immediate defiance,' replied the other; 'for the only alternative I propose, is to forego your design upon that lady, or to decide our pretensions by the sword.'

Our hero having expressed a regard for this visitant, as the son of a gentleman whom he honoured, was at the pains to represent the unreasonableness of his demand, and the folly of his presumption; and earnestly exhorted him to put the issue of his cause upon a more safe and equitable footing. But this admonition, instead of appeasing the wrath, seemed to inflame the resentment of the opponent, who swore he would not leave him until he should have accomplished the purport of his errand. In vain our adventurer re-

quested half an hour for the dispatch of some urgent business, in which he was engaged with a gentleman in the other parlour: this impetuous rival rejected all the terms he could propose, and even challenged him to decide the controversy upon the spot; an expedient to which the other having assented with reluctance, the door was secured, the swords unsheathed, and a hot engagement ensued, to the inexpressible pleasure of the Swiss, who did not doubt that he himself would be screened from all danger by the event of this encounter. Nevertheless, his hope was disappointed, in the defeat of the stranger, who was quickly disarmed, in consequence of a wound through the sword arm; upon which occasion Fathom was heard to say, that in consideration of his youth and family, he had spared his life; but he would not act with the same tenderness towards any other antagonist. He then bound up the limb he had disabled, conducted the vanquished party to his chair, rejoined the chevalier with a serene countenance, and asking pardon for having detained him so long, proposed they should instantly set out in a hackney-coach for the place of appointment.

The stratagem thus conducted, had all the success the inventor could desire. The fear of the Swiss had risen almost to an extasy, before the count quitted the room; but after this sham battle, which had been preconcerted betwixt our adventurer and his friend Ratchkali, the chevalier's terrors were unspeakable. He considered Fathom as a devil incarnate, and went into the coach as a malefactor bound for Tyburn. He would have gladly compounded for the loss of a leg or arm, and entertained some transient gleams of hope, that he should escape for half a dozen flesh-wounds, which he would have willingly received, as the price of his presumption; but these hopes were banished by the remembrance of that dreadful declaration which he had heard the count make, after having overcome his last adversary; and he continued under the power of the most insupportable pannick, until the carriage halted at Hyde Park Corner, where he crawled forth in a most piteous and lamentable condition; so that when they reached the spot, he was scarce able to stand.

Here he made an effort to speak, and proposed

proposed an accommodation upon a new plan, by which he promised to leave his cause to the arbitrement of those gentlemen who were present at the rupture, and to ask pardon of the count, provided he should be found guilty of a trespass upon good-manners: but this proposal would not satisfy the implacable Ferdinand; who, perceiving the agony of the Swiss, resolved to make the most of the adventure, and giving him to understand he was not a man to be trifled with, desired him to draw without farther preamble. Thus compelled, the unfortunate gamester pulled off his coat, and putting himself in a posture, to use the words of Nym, 'winked and held out his cold iron.'

Our adventurer, far from making a gentle use of the advantages he possessed, fiercely attacked him, while he was incapable of making resistance, and aiming at a fleshy part, ran him through the arm and outside of the shoulder at the very first pass: the chevalier, already stupified with the horror of expectation, no sooner felt his adversary's point in his body, than he fell to the ground, and concluding he was no longer a man for this world, began to cross himself with great devotion, while Fathom walked home deliberately, and in his way sent a couple of chairmen to the assistance of the wounded knight.

This achievement, which could not be concealed from the knowledge of the publick, not only furnished the character of Fathom with fresh wreathes of admiration and applause, but likewise effectually secured him from any future attempts of his enemies, to whom the Swiss, for his own sake, had communicated such terrible ideas of his valour, as over-awed the whole community.

C H A P. XXXIV.

HE PERFORMS ANOTHER EXPLOIT
THAT CONVEYS A TRUE IDEA
OF HIS GRATITUDE AND HO-
NOUR.

IT was not long after this celebrated victory, that he was invited to spend part of the summer, at the house of a country gentleman, who lived about one hundred miles from London, possessed of a very opulent fortune, the greatest part of which was expended in

acts of old English hospitality. He had met with our hero by accident, at the table of a certain great man, and was so struck with his manner and conversation, as to desire his acquaintance and cultivate his friendship; and he thought himself extremely happy in having prevailed upon him to pass a few weeks in his family.

Fathom, among his other observations, perceived that there was a domestick uneasiness occasioned by a very beautiful young creature, about the age of fifteen, who resided in the house under the title of a gentleman's niece, though she was in reality his natural daughter, born before his marriage. This circumstance was not unknown to his lady, by whose express approbation he had bestowed particular attention upon the education of the child, whom we shall distinguish by the name of Celinda: their liberality in this particular had not been misapplied; for she not only gave marks of uncommon capacity, but as she grew up, became more and more amiable in her person, and was now returned from the boarding-school, possessed of every accomplishment that could be acquired by one of her age and opportunities. These qualifications, which endeared her to every other person, excited the jealousy and displeasure of her supposed aunt, who could not bear to see her own children eclipsed by this illegitimate daughter, whom she therefore discountenanced upon all occasions, and exposed to such mortifications as would in all appearance drive her from her father's house. This persecuting spirit was very disagreeable to the husband, who loved Celinda with a truly paternal affection, and produced abundance of family disquiet; but being a man of a peaceable and yielding disposition, he could not long maintain the resolution he had taken in her favour, and therefore he ceased opposing the malevolence of his wife.

In this unfortunate predicament stood the fair bastard, at the arrival of our adventurer; who being allured by her charms, and apprized of her situation, at the same time, took the generous resolution to undermine her innocence, that he might banquet his vicious appetite with the spoils of her beauty. Perhaps such a brutal design might not have entered his imagination, if he had not observed in the disposition of this hapless

hapless maiden, certain peculiarities from which he derived the most confident passages of success. Besides a total want of experience, that left her open and unguarded against the attacks of the other sex, she discovered a remarkable spirit of credulity and superstitious fear, which had been cherished by the conversation of her school-fellows: she was particularly fond of musick, in which she had made some progress; but so delicate was the texture of her nerves, that one day, while Fathom entertained the company with a favourite air, she actually swooned with pleasure.

Such sensibility, our projector well knew, must be diffused through all the passions of her heart; he congratulated himself upon the sure ascendancy he had gained over her in this particular; and forthwith began to execute the plan he had erected for her destruction. That he might the more effectually deceive the vigilance of her father's wife, he threw such a dash of affectation in his complaisance towards Celinda, as could not escape the notice of that prying matron, though it was not palpable enough to disoblige the young lady herself, who could not so well distinguish between overstrained courtesy and real good-breeding: this behaviour screened him from the suspicion of the family, who considered it as an effort of politeness, to cover his indifference and disgust for the daughter of his friend, who had by this time given some reason to believe she looked upon him with the eyes of affection; so that the opportunities he enjoyed of conversing with her in private were less liable to intrusion or inquiry. Indeed, from what I have already observed touching the sentiments of her step-dame, that lady, far from taking measures for thwarting our hero's design, would have rejoiced at the execution of it, and had she been informed of his intent, might have fallen upon some method to facilitate the enterprize; but as he solely depended upon his own talents, he never dreamed of soliciting such an auxiliary.

Under cover of instructing and accomplishing her in the exercise of musick, he could not want occasions for promoting his aim: when, after having soothed her sense of hearing, even to a degree of ravishment, so as to extort from her an exclamation importing that he was surely something supernatural!

he never failed to whisper some insidious compliment or tale of love, exquisitely suited to the emotions of her soul. Thus was her heart insensibly subdued, though more than half his work was still undone; for at all times she disclosed such purity of sentiment, such inviolable attachment to religion and virtue, and seemed so averse to all sorts of inflammatory discourse, that he durst not presume, upon the footing he had gained in her affection, to explain the baseness of his desire; he therefore applied to another of her passions, that proved the bane of her virtue: this was her timidity, which at first being constitutional, was afterwards increased by the circumstances of her education, and now aggravated by the artful conversation of Fathom, which he chequered with dismal stories of omens, portents, prophecies, and apparitions, delivered upon such unquestionable testimony, and with such marks of conviction, as captivated the belief of the devoted Celinda, and filled her imagination with unceasing terrors.

In vain she strove to dispel those frightful ideas, and avoid such topics of discourse for the future: the more she endeavoured to banish them, the more troublesome they became; and such was her infatuation, that as her terrors increased, her thirst after that sort of knowledge was augmented. Many sleepless nights did she pass amidst those horrors of fancy, starting at every noise, and sweating with dreary apprehension, yet ashamed to own her fears, or solicit the comfort of a bed-fellow, lest she should incur the ridicule and censure of her father's wife; and what rendered this disposition the more irksome, was the solitary situation of her chamber, that stood at the end of a long gallery, scarce within hearing of any other inhabited part of the house.

All these circumstances had been duly weighed by our projector, who having prepared Celinda for his purpose, stole at midnight from his apartment, which was in another story, and approaching her door, there uttered a piteous groan; then softly retired to his bed, in full confidence of seeing next day the effect of this operation: nor did his arrow miss the mark; poor Celinda's countenance gave such indications of melancholy and dismay, that he could not omit asking the cause of her disquiet; and she, at his earnest request, was prevailed

veiled upon to communicate the dreadful salutation of the preceding night, which she considered as an omen of death to some person in the family, in all probability to herself, as the groan seemed to issue from one corner of her own apartment. Our adventurer argued against this supposition, as contradictory to the common observation of those supernatural warnings, which are not usually imparted to the person who is doomed to die, but to some faithful friend or trusty servant, particularly interested in the event. He therefore supposed the groans foreboded the death of my lady, who seemed to be in a drooping state of health, and were by her genius conveyed to the organs of Celinda, who was the chief sufferer by her jealous and barbarous disposition; he likewise expressed an earnest desire to be an ear-witness of such solemn communication; and alledging that it was highly improper for a young lady of her delicate feelings to expose herself alone to such another dismal visitation, begged he might be allowed to watch all night in her chamber, in order to defend her from the shocking impressions of fear.

Though no person ever stood more in need of a companion or guard, and her heart throbbed with transports of dismay at the prospect of night, she rejected his proposal with due acknowledgment, and resolved to trust solely to the protection of Heaven: not that she thought her innocence or reputation could suffer by her compliance with his request; for hitherto her heart was a stranger to those young desires which haunt the fancy and warm the breast of youth; so that being ignorant of her danger, she saw not the necessity of avoiding temptation; but she refused to admit a man into her bed-chamber, merely because it was a step altogether opposite to the forms and decorum of life. Nevertheless, far from being discouraged by this repulse, he knew her fears would multiply, and reduce that reluctance; which, in order to weaken, he had recourse to another piece of machinery, that operated powerfully in behalf of his design.

Some years ago, a twelve-stringed instrument was contrived by a very ingenious musician, by whom it was aptly intitled the harp of *Æolus*, because, being properly applied to a stream of air, it produces a wild, irregular variety of

harmonious sounds, that seem to be the effect of enchantment, and wonderfully dispose the mind for the most romantic situations. Fathom, who was really a virtuoso in musick, had brought one of those new-fashioned guitars into the country, and as the effect of it was still unknown in the family, he that night converted it to the purposes of his amour, by fixing it in the casement of a window belonging to the gallery, exposed to the west-wind, which then blew in a gentle breeze. The strings no sooner felt the impression of the balmy zephyr, than they began to pour forth a stream of melody, more ravishingly delightful than the song of *Philomel*, the warbling brook, and all the concert of the wood. The soft and tender notes of peace and love were swelled up with the most delicate and insensible transition, into a loud hymn of triumph and exultation, joined by the deep-toned organ, and a full choir of voices, which gradually decayed upon the ear, until it died away in distant sound, as if a flight of angels had raised the song in their ascent to Heaven. Yet the chords hardly ceased to vibrate after the expiration of this overture, which ushered in a composition in the same pathetick stile; and this again was succeeded by a third, almost without pause or intermission, as if the artist's hand had been indefatigable, and the theme never to be exhausted.

His heart must be quite callous, and his ear lost to all distinction, who could hear such harmony without emotion; how deeply then must it have affected the delicate *Celinda*, whose sensations, naturally acute, were whetted to a most painful keenness by her apprehension; who could have no previous idea of such entertainment, and was credulous enough to believe the most improbable tale of superstition! She was overwhelmed with awful terror, and never doubting that the sounds were more than mortal, recommended herself to the care of Providence in a succession of pious ejaculations.

Our adventurer having allowed some time for the effect of this contrivance, repaired to her chamber-door, and in a whisper conveyed through the key-hole, asked if she was awake, begged pardon for such an unseasonable visit, and desired to know her opinion of the strange musick which he then heard. In spite
of

of her notions of decency, she was glad of his intrusion, and being in no condition to observe punctilios, slipped on a wrapper, opened the door, and with a faltering voice, owned herself frightened almost to distraction. He pretended to console her with reflections, importing, that she was in the hands of a benevolent Being, who would not impose upon his creatures any task which they could not bear: he insisted upon her returning to bed, and assured her he would not stir from her chamber till day. Thus comforted, she betook herself again to rest, while he sat down in an elbow chair at some distance from the bed-side, and in a soft voice began the conversation with her, on the subject of those visitations from above; which, though undertaken on pretence of dissipating her fear and anxiety, was in reality calculated for the purpose of augmenting both.

‘That sweet air,’ said he, ‘seems designed for soothing the bodily anguish of some saint in his last moments. Hark! how it rises into a more sprightly and elevated strain, as if it were an inspiring invitation to the realms of bliss! sure he is now absolved from all the misery of this life; that full and glorious concert of voices and celestial harps, betoken his reception among the heavenly choir, who now waft his soul to paradisaic joys! this is altogether great, solemn, and amazing! The clock strikes one; the symphony hath ceased!’

This was actually the case; for he had ordered Maurice to remove the instrument at that hour, lest the sound of it should become too familiar, and excite the curiosity of some undaunted domestick, who might frustrate his scheme, by discovering the apparatus. As for poor Celinda, her fancy was, by his musick and discourse, worked up to the highest pitch of enthusiastick terrors; the whole bed shook with her trepidation, the awful silence that succeeded the supernatural musick, threw an additional damp upon her spirits, and the artful Fathom affecting to snore at the same time, she could no longer contain her horror, but called upon his name with a fearful accent, and having owned her present situation insupportable, intreated him to draw near her bed-side,

that he might be within touch on any emergency.

This was a welcome request to our adventurer, who asked pardon for his drowsiness; and taking his station on the side of her bed, exhorted her to compose herself; then locking her hand fast in his own, was again seized with such an inclination to sleep, that he gradually sunk down by her side, and seemed to enjoy his repose in that attitude. Meanwhile, his tender-hearted mistress, that he might not suffer in his health by his humanity and complaisance, covered him with the counterpane as he slept, and suffered him to take his rest, without interruption; till he thought proper to start up suddenly, with an exclamation of, ‘Heaven watch over us!’ and then asked, with symptoms of astonishment, if she had heard nothing. Such an abrupt address, upon such an occasion, did not fail to amaze and affright the gentle Celinda; who, unable to speak, sprung towards her treacherous protector; and he, catching her in his arms, bade her fear nothing; for he would, at the expence of his life, defend her from all danger.

Having thus, by tampering with her weakness, conquered the first and chief obstacles to his design, he with great art and perseverance improved the intercourse to such a degree of intimacy as could not but be productive of all the consequences which he had foreseen. The groans and musick were occasionally repeated, so as to alarm the whole family, and inspire a thousand various conjectures: he failed not to continue his nocturnal visits and ghastly discourse, until his attendance became so necessary to this unhappy maiden, that she durst not stay in her own chamber without his company, nor even sleep, except in contact with her betrayer.

Such a commerce between two such persons of a different sex, could not possibly be long carried on, without degenerating from the platonick system of sentimental love. In her paroxysms of dismay, he did not forget to breathe the soft inspirations of his passion, to which she listened with more pleasure, as they diverted the gloomy ideas of her fear; and by this time his extraordinary accomplishments had made a conquest of her heart. What therefore could be a more interesting transition, than that

from the most uneasy to the most agreeable sensation of the human breast!

This being the case, the reader will not wonder that a consummate traitor, like Fathom, should triumph over the virtue of an artless, innocent, young creature, whose passions he had entirely under his command. The gradations towards vice are almost imperceptible, and an experienced seducer can strew them with such enticing and agreeable flowers, as will lead the young sinner on insensibly, even to the most profligate stages of guilt. All, therefore, that can be done by virtue, unassisted with experience, is to avoid every trial with such a formidable foe, by declining and discouraging the first advances towards a particular correspondence with perfidious man, howsoever agreeable it may seem to be: for here is no security but in conscious weakness.

Fathom, though possessed of the spoils of poor Celinda's honour, did not enjoy his success with tranquillity. Reflection and remorse often invaded her in the midst of their guilty pleasures, and embittered all those moments they had dedicated to mutual bliss. For the seeds of virtue are seldom destroyed at once. Even amidst the rank productions of vice, they regerminate to a sort of imperfect vegetation; like some scattered hyacinths shooting up among the weeds of a ruined garden, that testify the former culture and amenity of the soil: she sighed at the sad remembrance of that virgin-dignity which she had lost; she wept at the prospect of that disgrace, mortification, and misery she should undergo, when abandoned by this transient lover, and severely reproached him for the arts he had used to shipwreck her innocence and peace.

Such expostulations are extremely unseasonable, when addressed to a man well-nigh sated with the effects of his conquest; they act like strong blasts of wind applied to embers almost extinguished, which, instead of reviving the flame, scatter and destroy every remaining particle of fire. Our adventurer, in the midst of his peculiarities, had inconstancy in common with the rest of his sex. More than half cloyed with the possession of Celinda, he could not fail to be disgusted with her upbraidings; and had she not been the daughter of a gentleman whose friendship he did not think it his interest to forfeit, he

would have dropped this correspondence without reluctance or hesitation: but as he had measures to keep with a family of such consequence, he constrained his inclinations so far as to counterfeit those raptures he no longer felt, and found means to appease those intervening tumults of her grief.

Foreseeing, however, that it would not be always in his power to console her on these terms, he resolved, if possible, to divide her affection, which now glowed upon him too intensely; and with that view, whenever she complained of the vapours or dejection, he prescribed, and even insisted upon her swallowing, certain cordials of the most palatable composition, without which he never travelled; and these produced such agreeable reveries and flow of spirits, that she gradually became enamoured of intoxication; while he encouraged the pernicious passion, by expressing the most extravagant applause and admiration at the wild irregular sallies it produced. Without having first made this diversion, he would have found it impracticable to leave the house in tranquillity; but when this bewitching philtre grew into an habit, her attachment to Ferdinand was insensibly dissolved; she began to bear his neglect with indifference, and sequestering herself from the rest of the family, used to solicit this new ally for consolation.

Having thus put the finishing stroke to the daughter's ruin, he took leave of the father, with many acknowledgments and expressions of gratitude for his hospitality and friendship; and riding cross the country to Bristol, took up his habitation near the Hot-well, where he staid during the remaining part of the season. As for the miserable Celinda, she became more and more addicted to the vices in which she had been initiated by his superlative perfidy and craft; until she was quite abandoned by decency and caution. Her father's heart was torn with anguish, while his wife rejoiced in her fall. At length, her ideas were quite debased by her infirmity; she grew every day more and more sensual and degenerate, and contracted an intimacy with one of the footmen; who was kind enough to take her to wife, in hope of obtaining a good settlement from his master; but being disappointed in his aim, he conducted her to London, where he made shift to insinuate

insinuate himself into another service, leaving to her the use, and partly the advantage, of her own person, which was still uncommonly attractive.

CHAP. XXXV.

HE REPAIRS TO BRISTOL SPRING,
WHERE HE REIGNS PARAMOUNT
DURING THE WHOLE SEASON.

WE shall therefore leave her in this comfortable situation, and return to our adventurer, whose appearance at Bristol was considered as a happy omen by the proprietor of the hot-well, and all the people who live by the resort of company to that celebrated spring. Nor were they deceived in their prognostick; Fathom, as usual, formed the nucleus or kernel of the beau monde; and the season soon became so crowded, that many people of fashion were obliged to quit the place for want of lodging. Ferdinand was the soul that animated the whole society. He not only invented parties of pleasure, but also, by his personal talents, rendered them more agreeable: in a word, he regulated their diversions, and the master of the ceremonies never would allow the ball to be begun until the count was seated.

Having thus made himself the object of admiration and esteem, his advice was an oracle to which they had recourse in all doubtful cases of punctilio or dispute, or even of medicine; for, among his other accomplishments, his discourse on that subject was so plausible, and well adapted to the understanding of his hearers, that any person who had not actually studied the medical art, would have believed he was inspired by the spirit of *Æsculapius*. What contributed to the aggrandizement of his character in this branch of knowledge, was a victory he obtained over an old physician, who plied at the well, and had one day unfortunately begun to harangue in the pump-room upon the nature of the Bristol-water. In the course of this lecture, he undertook to account for the warmth of the fluid; and his ideas being perplexed with a great deal of reading, which he had not been able to digest, his disquisition was so indistinct, and his expression so obscure and unentertaining, that our hero

seized the opportunity of displaying his own erudition, by venturing to contradict some circumstances of the doctor's hypothesis, and substituting a theory of his own, which, as he had invented it for the purpose, was equally amusing and chimerical.

He alledged, that fire was the sole vivifying principle that pervaded all nature; that as the heat of the sun concocted the juice of vegetables, and ripened those fruits that grow upon the surface of this globe, there was likewise an immense store of central fire reserved within the bowels of the earth, not only for the generation of gems, fossils, and all the purposes of the mineral world; but likewise for cherishing and keeping alive those plants which would otherwise perish by the winter's cold. The existence of such a fire he proved from the nature of all those volcanoes, which, in almost every corner of the earth, are continually vomiting up either flames or smoke. 'These,' said he, 'are the great vents appointed by Nature for the discharge of that rarified air, and combustible matter, which, if confined, would burst the globe asunder. But besides the larger outlets, there are some small chimnies through which part of the heat transpires; a vapour of that sort, I conceive, must pass through the bed or channel of this spring, the waters of which, accordingly, retain a moderate warmth.'

This account, which totally overthrew the other's doctrine, was so extremely agreeable to the audience, that the testy doctor lost his temper; and gave them to understand, without preamble, that he must be a person wholly ignorant of natural philosophy, who could invent such a ridiculous system, and they involved in worse than an Egyptian fog, that could not at once discern its weakness and absurdity. This declaration introduced a dispute, which was unanimously determined in favour of our adventurer. On all such occasions, the stream of prejudice runs against the physician, even though his antagonist has nothing to recommend himself to the favour of the spectators. And this decision depends upon divers considerations: in the first place, there is a continual war carried on against the learned professions, by all those who, conscious of their own ignorance, seek to level the reputation of their superiors

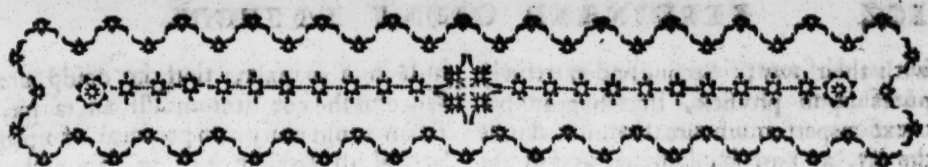
with their own. Secondly, in all disputes upon physick, that happen betwixt a person who really understands the art, and an illiterate pretender, the arguments of the first will seem obscure and unintelligible to those who are unacquainted with the previous systems on which they are built; while the other's theory, derived from common notions, and superficial observation, will be more agreeable, because better adapted to the comprehension of the hearers. Thirdly, the judgment of the multitude is apt to be biased by that surprize, which is the effect of seeing an artist foiled at his own weapons, by one who engages him only for amusement.

Fathom, besides these advantages, was blessed with a flow of language, an elegant address, a polite and self-denying stile of argumentation, together with a temper not to be ruffled; so that the victory could not long waver between him and the physician, to whom he was infinitely superior in every acquisition but that of solid learning, of which the judges had no idea. This contest was not only glorious but profitable to our adventurer; who grew into such request in his medical capacity, that the poor doctor was utterly deserted by his patients, and Fathom's advice solicited by every valetudinarian in the place: nor did he forfeit the character he thus acquired, by any miscarriages in his practice; being but little conversant with the *materia medica*, the circle of his prescriptions was very small; his chief study was, to avoid all drugs of rough operation and uncertain affect, and to administer such only as should be agree-

able to the palate without doing violence to the constitution. Such a physician could not but be agreeable to people of all dispositions; and as most of the patients were in some shape hypochondriack, the power of imagination co-operating with his remedies, often effected a cure.

On the whole, it became the fashion to consult the count in all distempers; and his reputation would have had it's ruin, though the death of every patient had given the lye to his pretensions. But empty fame was not the sole fruit of his success. Though no person would presume to affront this noble graduate with a fee, they did not fail to manifest their gratitude by some more valuable present: every day some superb piece of china, curious snuff-box, or jewel, was pressed upon him; so that at the end of the season, he could almost have furnished a toy-shop, with the acknowledgments he had received. Not only his avarice, but his pleasure, was gratified in the course of his medical administration. He enjoyed free access, egress and regress, with all the females at the well, and no matron scrupled to put her daughter under his care and direction. These opportunities could not be lost upon a man of his intriguing genius; though he conducted his amours with such discretion, that during the whole season no lady's character suffered on his account; yet he was highly fortunate in his addresses; and we may venture to affirm, that the reproach of barrenness was more than once removed by the vigour of his endeavours.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



THE
ADVENTURES
OF
FERDINAND COUNT FATHOM.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

CHAP. I.

HE IS SMITTEN WITH THE CHARMS
OF A FEMALE ADVENTURER,
WHOSE ALLUREMENTS SUBJECT
HIM TO A NEW VICISSITUDE OF
FORTUNE.

 AMONG those who were distinguished by his gallantry, was the young wife of an old citizen of London, who had granted her permission to reside at the Hot-well for the benefit of her health, under the eye and inspection of his own sister, who was a maiden of fifty years. The pupil, whose name was Mrs. Trapwell, though low in stature, was finely shaped, her countenance engaging, though her complexion was brown, her hair in colour rivalled the raven's back, and her eyes emulated the lustre of the diamond. Fathom had been struck with her first appearance; but found it impracticable to elude the vigilance of her duenna, so as to make a declaration of his flame; until she herself guessing the situation of his thoughts, and not displeased with the discovery, thought proper to furnish him with the opportunity he wanted, by counterfeiting an indisposition, for the cure of which she knew his advice would be implored. This was the beginning of an acquaintance, which was soon improved to his wish;

and so well did she manage her attractions, as in some measure to fix the inconstancy of his disposition; for, at the end of the season, his passion was not sated; and they concerted the means of continuing their commerce, even after their return to London.

This intercourse effectually answered the purpose of the husband, who had been decoyed into matrimony by the cunning of his spouse, whom he had privately kept as a concubine before marriage. Conscious of her own precarious situation, she had resolved to impose upon the infirmities of Trapwell, and feigning herself pregnant, gave him to understand she could no longer conceal her condition from the knowledge of her brother, who was an officer in the army, and of such violent passions, that should he once discover her backsliding, he would undoubtedly wipe away the stains of his family dishonour with her own blood, as well as that of her keeper. The citizen, to prevent such a catastrophe, took her to wife; but soon after perceiving the trick which had been played upon him, set his invention at work, and at length contrived a scheme which he thought would enable him not only to retrieve his liberty, but also indemnify himself for the mortification he had undergone.

Far from creating any domestick disturbance, by upbraiding her with her finesse, he seemed perfectly well pleased with his acquisition; and as he knew her

her void of any principle, and extremely addicted to pleasure, he chose proper occasions to insinuate, that she might gratify her own inclination, and at the same time turn her beauty to good account. She joyfully listened to these remonstrances, and in consequence of their mutual agreement, she repaired to Bristol Spring, on pretence of an ill state of health, accompanied by her sister-in-law, whom they did not think proper to intrust with the real motive of her journey. Fathom's person was agreeable, and his finances supposed to be in flourishing order; therefore, she selected him from the herd of gallants, as a proper sacrifice to the powers which she adored; and on her arrival in London, made her husband acquainted with the importance of her conquest.

Trapwell overwhelmed her with caresses and praise for her discreet and dutiful conduct, and faithfully promised that she should pocket in her own privy purse one half of the spoils that should be gathered from her gallant, whom she therefore undertook to betray; after he had sworn in the most solemn manner, that his intention was not to bring the affair to a publick trial, which would redound to his own disgrace, but to extort a round sum of money from the count by way of composition. Confiding in this protestation, she in a few days gave him intelligence of an assignation she had made with our adventurer, at a certain bagnio near Covent Garden; upon which he secured the assistance of a particular friend and his own journeyman, with whom, and a constable, he repaired to the place of rendezvous, where he waited in an adjoining room according to the directions of his virtuous spouse, untill she made the preconcerted signal of hemming three times aloud, when he and his associates rushed into the chamber and surprized our hero in bed with his inamorata.

The lady, on this occasion, acted her part to a miracle: she screamed at their approach; and after an exclamation of 'Ruined and undone!' fainted away in the arms of her spouse, who had by this time seized her by the shoulders, and began to upbraid her with her infidelity and guilt. As for Fathom, his affliction was unutterable, when he found himself discovered in that situation, and made prisoner by the two assistants, who had pinioned him

in such a manner, that he could not stir, much less accomplish an escape. All his ingenuity and presence of mind seemed to forsake him in this emergency. The horrors of an English jury overspread his imagination: for he at once perceived that the toil into which he had fallen was laid for the purpose; consequently he took it for granted, that there would be no deficiency in point of evidence. Soon as he recollected himself, he begged that no violence might be offered to his person, and intreated the husband to favour him with a conference, in which the affair might be compromised, without prejudice to the reputation of either.

At first, Trapwell breathed nothing but implacable revenge; but, by the persuasion of his friends, after he had sent home his wife in a chair, he was prevailed upon to hear the proposals of the delinquent, who having assured him, by way of apology, that he had always believed the lady was a widow, made him an offer of five hundred pounds, as an atonement for the injury he had sustained. This being a sum no ways adequate to the expectation of the citizen, who looked upon the count as possessor of an immense estate, he rejected the terms with disdain, and made instant application to a judge, from whom he obtained a warrant for securing his person till the day of trial. Indeed, in this case, money was but a secondary consideration with Trapwell, whose chief aim was to be legally divorced from a woman he detested. Therefore, there was no remedy for the unhappy count, who in vain offered to double the sum: he found himself reduced to the bitter alternative of procuring immediate bail, or going directly to Newgate.

In this dilemma he sent a messenger to his friend Ratchkali, whose countenance fell when he understood the count's condition; nor would he open his mouth in the stile of consolation, until he had consulted a certain solicitor of his acquaintance, who assured him the law abounded with such resources, as would infallibly screen the defendant, had the fact been still more palpable than it was. He said there was great presumption to believe the count had fallen a sacrifice to a conspiracy, which by some means or other would be detected; and, in that case, the

the plaintiff might obtain one shilling in lieu of damages. If that dependance should fail, he hinted that, in all probability, the witnesses were not incorruptible; or should they prove to be so, one man's oath was as good as another's, and, thank Heaven! there was no dearth of evidence, provided money could be found to answer the necessary occasions.

Ratchkali, comforted by these insinuations, and dreading the resentment of our adventurer, who in his despair might punish him severely for his want of friendship, by some precipitate explanation of the commerce they had carried on; moved, I say, by these considerations, and moreover tempted with the prospect of continuing to reap the advantages resulting from their conjunction, he and another person of credit, with whom he largely dealt in jewels, condescended to become sureties for the appearance of Fathom, who was accordingly admitted to bail. Not but that the Tyroleze knew Ferdinand too well to confide in his parole: he depended chiefly upon his ideas of self-interest, which he thought would persuade him to risk the uncertain issue of a trial, rather than quit the field before the harvest was half over; and he resolved to make his own retreat, without ceremony, should our hero be unwise enough to abandon his bail.

Such an adventure could not long lie concealed from the notice of the publick, even if both parties had been at pains to suppress the circumstances: but the plaintiff, far from seeking to cover, affected to complain loudly of his misfortune, that he might interest his neighbours in his behalf, and raise a spirit of rancour and animosity, to influence the jury against this insolent foreigner, who had come over into England to debauch our wives and de-flower our daughters; while he employed a formidable band of lawyers to support the indictment, which he laid for ten thousand pounds damages.

Meanwhile, Fathom and his associate did not fail to take all proper measures for his defence; they retained a powerful bar of counsel, and the solicitor was supplied with one hundred pounds after another, to answer the expence of secret service; still assuring his clients that every thing was in an excellent train, and that his adversary would gain nothing but shame and confusion of

face. Nevertheless, there was a necessity for postponing the trial, on account of a material evidence, who, though he wavered, was not yet quite brought over; and the attorney found means to put off the decision from term to term, until there was no quibble left for farther delay. While this suit was depending, our hero continued to move in his usual sphere; nor did the report of his situation at all operate to his disadvantage in the polite world: on the contrary, it added a fresh plume to his character in the eyes of all those who were not before acquainted with the triumphs of his gallantry. Notwithstanding this countenance of his friends, he himself considered the affair in a very serious light; and perceiving that at any rate he must be a considerable loser, he resolved to double his assiduity in trade, that he might be the more able to afford the extraordinary expence to which he was subjected.

CHAP. II.

FRESH CAUSE FOR EXERTING HIS EQUANIMITY AND FORTITUDE.

THE reader may have observed, that Fathom, with all his circumspection, had a weak side, which exposed him to sundry mischances; this was his covetousness, which on some occasions became too hard for his discretion: at this period of time, it was by the circumstances of his situation, inflamed to a degree of rapacity. He was now prevailed upon to take a hand at whist or piquet, and even to wield the hazard-box; though he had hitherto declared himself an irreconcilable enemy to all sorts of play; and so uncommon was his success and dexterity at these exercises, as to surprize his acquaintance, and arouse the suspicion of some people, who repined at his prosperity.

But in nothing was his conduct more inexcusable, than in giving way to the dangerous temerity of Ratchkali, which he had been always at pains to restrain, and permitting him to practise the same fraud upon an English nobleman, which had been executed upon himself at Franckfort. In other words, the Tyroleze, by the canal of Ferdinand's finger and recommendation, sold a pebble

pebble for a real brilliant, and in a few days the cheat was discovered, to the infinite confusion of our adventurer; who, nevertheless, assumed the guise of innocence with so much art, and expressed such indignation against the villain, who had imposed upon his judgment and unsuspecting generosity, that his lordship acquitted him of any share in the deceit, and contented himself with the restitution, which he insisted upon making out of his own pocket, until he should be able to apprehend the rogue, who had thought proper to abscond for his own safety. In spite of all this exculpation, his character did not fail to retain a sort of stigma, which indeed the plainest proofs of innocence are hardly able to efface; and his connection with such a palpable knave as the Tyroleze appeared to be, had an effect to his prejudice, in the minds of all those who were privy to the occurrence.

When a man's reputation is once brought in question, every trifle is, by the malevolence of mankind, magnified into a strong presumption against the culprit: a few whispers communicated by the envious mouth of slander, which he can have no opportunity to answer and refute, shall, in the opinion of the world, convict him of the most horrid crimes; and for one hypocrite who is decked with the honours of virtue, there are twenty good men who suffer the ignominy of vice; so well disposed are individuals to trample upon the fame of their fellow-creatures. If the most unblemished merit is not protected from this injustice, it will not be wondered at that no quarter was given to the character of an adventurer like Fathom; who, among other unlucky occurrences, had the misfortune to be recognized about this time, by his two Parisian friends, Sir Stentor Stiles, and Sir Giles Squirrel.

These worthy knights errant had returned to their own country, after having made a very prosperous campaign in France; at the end of which, however, they very narrowly escaped the gallies; and seeing the Polish count seated at the head of taste and politeness, they immediately circulated the story of his defeat at Paris, with many ludicrous circumstances of their own invention, and did not scruple to affirm that he was a rank impostor. When

the laugh is raised upon a great man, he never fails to dwindle into contempt. Ferdinand began to perceive a change in the countenance of his friends. His company was no longer solicited with that eagerness which they had formerly expressed in his behalf: even his entertainments were neglected; when he appeared at any private or publick assembly, the ladies, instead of glowing with pleasure, as formerly, now tittered, or regarded him with looks of disdain; and a certain pert, little, forward coquette, with a view to put him out of countenance by raising the laugh at his expence, asked him one night, at a drum, When he had heard from his relations in Poland. She succeeded in her design upon the mirth of the audience, but was disappointed in the other part of her aim; for our hero replied, without the least mark of discomposure, 'They are all in good health, at your service, Madam: I wish I knew in what part of the world your relations reside, that I might return the compliment.' By this answer, which was the more severe, as the young lady was of very doubtful extraction, he retorted the laugh upon the aggressor, though he likewise failed in his attempt upon her temper: for she was perhaps the only person present, who equalled himself in stability of countenance.

Notwithstanding this appearance of unconcern, he was deeply touched with these marks of alienation in the behaviour of his friends, and foreseeing in his own disgrace the total shipwreck of his fortune, he entered into a melancholy deliberation with himself about the means of retrieving his importance in the beau-monde, or of turning his address into some other channel, where he could stand upon a less slippery foundation. In this exercise of his thoughts, no scheme occurred more feasible than that of securing the booty he had made, and retiring with his associate, who was also blown, into some other country; where their names and characters being unknown, they might pursue their old plan of commerce without molestation. He imparted this suggestion to the Tyroleze, who approved the proposal of decamping, though he combated, with all his might, our hero's inclination to withdraw himself before the trial, by repeating the assurances of the solicitor, who

who told him he might depend upon being reimbursed by the sentence of the court for great part of the sums he had expended in the course of the prosecution.

Fathom suffered himself to be persuaded by these arguments, supported with the desire of making an honourable retreat; and waiting patiently for the day of trouble, discharged his sureties, by a personal appearance in court. Yet this was not the only score he discharged that morning; the solicitor presented his own bill before they set out for Westminster Hall, and gave the count to understand that it was the custom, from time immemorial, for the client to clear with his attorney before trial. Ferdinand had nothing to object against this established rule, though he looked upon it as a bad omen, in spite of all the solicitor's confidence and protestations; and he was not a little confounded, when looking into the contents, he found himself charged with three hundred and fifty attendances. He knew it was not his interest to disoblige his lawyer at such a juncture; nevertheless, he could not help expostulating with him on this article, which seemed to be so falsely stated with regard to the number; when his questions drew on an explanation, by which he found he had incurred the penalty of three shillings and four-pence for every time he chanced to meet the conscientious attorney, either in the Park, the coffee house, or the street, provided they had exchanged the common salutation: and he had great reason to believe the solicitor had often thrown himself in his way, with a view to swell this item of his account.

With this extortion our adventurer was fain to comply, because he lay at the mercy of the caiff; accordingly, he with a good grace paid the demand, which, including his former disbursements, amounted to three hundred and sixty-five pounds, eleven shillings, three pence three-farthings, and then presenting himself before the judge, quietly submitted to the laws of the realm. His counsel behaved like men of consummate abilities in their profession; they exerted themselves with equal industry, eloquence, and erudition, in their endeavours to perplex the truth, brow-beat the evidence, puzzle the judge, and mislead the jury: but the defendant found himself woefully disappointed in the de-

position of Trapwell's journeyman, whom the solicitor pretended to have converted to his interest: this witness, as the attorney afterwards declared, played booty, and the facts came out so clear, that Ferdinand Count Fathom was convicted of criminal conversation with the plaintiff's wife, and cast in fifteen hundred pounds, under the denomination of damages.

He was not so much surprized as afflicted at this decision, because he saw it gradually approaching from the examination of the first evidence: his thoughts were now employed in casting about for some method of deliverance from the snare in which he found himself intangled. To escape he foresaw it would be impracticable, as Trapwell would undoubtedly be prepared for arresting him before he could quit Westminster Hall; he was too well acquainted with Ratchkali's principles to expect any assistance from that quarter, in money-matters; and he was utterly averse to the payment of the sum awarded against him, which would have exhausted his whole fortune. He therefore resolved to try the friendship of some persons of fashion, with whom he had maintained an intimacy of correspondence: should they fail him in the day of his necessity, he proposed to have recourse to his former sureties, one of whom he meant to bilk, while the other might accompany him in his retreat: or, should both these expedients miscarry, he determined, rather than part with his effects, to undergo the most disagreeable confinement, in hope of obtaining the gaoler's connivance at his escape.

These resolutions being taken, he met his fate with great fortitude and equanimity; and calmly suffered himself to be conveyed to the house of a sheriff's officer; who, as he made his exit from the hall, according to his own expectation, executed a writ against him, at the suit of Trapwell, for a debt of two thousand pounds. To this place he was followed by his solicitor, who was allured by the prospect of another job, and who with great demonstrations of satisfaction, congratulated him upon the happy issue of the trial; arrogating to himself the merit of having saved him eight thousand pounds in the article of damages, by the previous steps he had taken, and the noble defence that he and his friends the

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counsel

counsel had made for their client: he even hinted an expectation of receiving a gratuity for his extraordinary care and discretion.

Fathom, galled as he was with his misfortune, and enraged at the effrontery of this pettifogger, maintained a serenity of countenance, and sent the attorney with a message to the plaintiff, importing, that as he was a foreigner, and could not be supposed to have so much cash about him, as to spare fifteen hundred pounds from the funds of his ordinary expence, he would grant him a bond payable in two months, during which period he should be able to procure a proper remittance from his own estate. While the solicitor was employed in this negociation, he dispatched his valet de chamber to one nobleman, and Maurice to another, with billets, signifying the nature of the verdict which his adversary had obtained, and desired that each would lend him a thousand pounds upon his parole, until he could negotiate bills upon the continent.

His three messengers returned almost at the same instant of time; and these were the answers they brought back.

Trapwell absolutely rejected his personal security; and threatened him with all the horrors of a gaol, unless he would immediately discharge the debt, or procure sufficient bondsmen; and one of his quality-friends favoured him with this reply to his request.

‘ MY DEAR COUNT !

‘ I Am mortally chagrined at the triumph you have furnished to that rascally citizen. By the lord! the judge must have been in the terrors of cuckoldom, to influence the decision; and the jury, a mere herd of horned beasts, to bring in such a barbarous verdict. Egad! at this rate, no gentleman will be able to lie with another man’s wife, but at the risk of a cursed prosecution. But, to wave this disagreeable circumstance, which you must strive to forget; I declare my mortification is still the greater, because I cannot at present supply you with the trifle your present exigency requires; for, to tell you a secret, my own finances are in damnable confusion. But a man of Count Fathom’s figure and address can never be puz-

zled for the want of such a paltry sum. Adieu, my dear count! We shall, I suppose, have the pleasure of seeing you to-morrow at White’s; meanwhile, I have the honour to be, with the most perfect attachment, yours,

‘ GRIZZLEGRIN.’

The other noble peer, to whom he addressed himself on this occasion, cherished the same sentiments of virtue, friendship, and generosity; but his expression was so different, that we shall, for the edification of the reader, transcribe his letter in his own words.

‘ SIR,

‘ I Was never more astonished than at the receipt of your very extraordinary billet, wherein you solicit the loan of a thousand pounds, which you desire may be sent with the bearer, on the faith of your parole. Sir, I have no money to send you or lend you; and cannot help repeating my expressions of surprize at your confidence in making such a strange and unwarranted demand. It is true, I may have made professions of friendship while I looked upon you as a person of honour and good morals; but now that you are convicted of such a flagrant violation of the laws of that kingdom where you have been treated with such hospitality and respect, I think myself fully absolved from any such conditional promise, which indeed is never interpreted into any other than a bare compliment. I am sorry you have involved your character and fortune in such a disagreeable affair, and am, Sir, yours, &c.

‘ TROMPINGTON.’

Ferdinand was not such a novice in the world as to be disappointed at these repulses; especially as he had laid very little stress upon the application, which was made by way of an experiment upon the gratitude or caprice of those two noblemen, whom he had actually more than once obliged with the same sort of assistance which he now solicited, though not to such a considerable amount.

Having nothing farther to expect from

from the fashionable world, he sent the Tyroleze to the person who had been bail for his appearance, with full instructions to explain his present occasion in the most favourable light, and desire he would reinforce the credit of the count with his security: but that gentleman, though he placed the most perfect confidence on the honour of our hero, and would have willingly entered into bonds again for his personal appearance, was not quite so well satisfied of his circumstances, as to become liable for the payment of two thousand pounds; an expence which, in his opinion, the finances of no foreign count were able to defray: he therefore lent a deaf ear to the most pressing remonstrances of the ambassador, who had recourse to several other merchants with the same bad success; so that the prisoner, despairing of bail, endeavoured to persuade Ratchkali, that it would be his interest to contribute a thousand pounds towards his discharge, that he might be enabled to quit England with a good grace, and execute his part of the plan they had projected.

So powerful was his eloquence on the occasion, and such strength of argument did he use, that even the Tyroleze seemed convinced, though reluctantly, and agreed to advance the necessary sum upon the bond and judgment of our adventurer, who being disabled from transacting his own affairs in person, was obliged to intrust Ratchkali with his keys, papers, and power of attorney, under the check and inspection of his faithful Maurice and the solicitor, whose fidelity he bespoke with the promise of an ample recompence.

CHAP. III.

THE BITER IS BIT.

YET, he had no sooner committed his effects to the care of this triumvirate, than his fancy was visited with direful warnings, which produced cold sweats and palpitations, and threw him into such agonies of apprehension as he had never known before. He remembered the former desertion of the Tyroleze, the recent villainy of the solicitor, and recollected the remarks he had made upon the disposition and cha-

rafter of his valet, which evinced him a fit companion for the other two.

Alarmed at these reflections, he intreated the bailiff to indulge him with a visit to his own lodgings; and even offered one hundred guineas as a gratification for his compliance. But the officer, who had formerly lost a considerable sum by the escape of a prisoner, would not run any risk in an affair of such consequence, and our hero was obliged to submit to the tortures of his own presaging fears. After he had waited five hours in the most racking impatience, he saw the attorney enter with all the marks of hurry, fatigue, and consternation, and heard him exclaim, 'Good God! have you seen the gentleman?'

Fathom found his fears realized in this interrogation, to which he answered in a tone of horror and dismay, 'What gentleman? I suppose I am robbed. Speak and keep me no longer in suspense.'—'Robbed!' cried the attorney, 'the Lord forbid! I hope you can depend upon the person you impowered to receive your jewels and cash. I must own his proceedings are a little extraordinary; for, after he had rummaged your scitore, from which in presence of me and your servant, he took one hundred and fifty guineas, a parcel of diamond rings and buckles, according to this here inventory, which I wrote with my own hand, and East-India bonds to the tune of five hundred more, we adjourned to Garraway's, where he left me alone, under pretence of going to a broker of his acquaintance who lived in the neighbourhood, while the valet, as I imagined, waited for us in the alley. Well, Sir, he stayed so long, that I began to be uneasy, and at length resolved to send the servant in quest of him, but when I went out for that purpose, deuce a servant was to be found. Though I in person enquired for him, at every alehouse within half a mile of the place. I then dispatched no less than five ticket-porters upon the scent after them; and I myself, by a direction from the bar-keeper, went to Signior Ratchkali's lodgings; where, as they told me, he had not been seen since nine o'clock in the morning. Upon this intimation, I came directly hither, to give

' you timely notice, that you may without delay take measures for your own security. The best thing you can do, is to take out writs for apprehending him, in the counties of Middlesex, Surry, Kent, and Essex, and I shall put them in the hands of trusty and diligent officers, who will soon ferret him out of his lurking place, provided he sculks within ten miles of the bills of mortality: to be sure the job will be expensive; and all these runners must be paid before-hand. But, what then? the defendant is worth powder, and if we can once secure him, I'll warrant the prosecution will quit cost.'

Fathom was almost choked with concern and resentment at the news of this mischance, so that he could not utter one word until this narrative was finished. Nor was his suspicion confined to the Tyroleze and his own lacquey; he considered the solicitor as their accomplice and director, and was so much provoked at the latter part of his harangue, that his discretion seemed to vanish, and collaring the attorney, 'Villain!' said he, 'you yourself have been a principal actor in this robbery;' then turning to the by-standers, 'and I desire, in the king's name, that he may be secured until I can make oath before a magistrate, in support of the charge. If you refuse your assistance in detaining him, I will make immediate application to one of the secretaries of state, who is my particular friend, and he will see justice done to all parties.'

At mention of this formidable name, the bailiff and his whole family were in commotion, to obstruct the retreat of the lawyer, who stood aghast, and trembled under the grasp of our adventurer; but, soon as he found himself delivered from this embrace, by the interposition of the spectators, and collected his spirits, which had been suddenly dissipated by Fathom's unexpected assault, he began to display one art of his occupation, which he always reserved for extraordinary occasions; this was the talent of abuse, which he poured forth with such fluency of opprobrious language, that our hero, smarting as he was, and almost desperate with his loss, deviated from that temperance of behaviour which he had hitherto preserved, and snatching up the poker,

with one stroke opened a deep trench upon the attorney's skull, that extended from the hind head, almost to the upper part of the nose, upon each side of which it discharged a sanguine stream. Notwithstanding the pain of this application, the solicitor was transported with joy at the sense of the smart, and inwardly congratulated himself upon the appearance of his own blood, which he no sooner perceived, than he exclaimed, 'I'm a dead man!' and fell upon the floor at full length.

Immediate recourse was had to a surgeon in the neighbourhood, who having examined the wound, declared there was a dangerous depression of the first table of the skull, and that if he could save the patient's life without the application of the trepan, it would be one of the greatest cures that ever were performed. By this time, Fathom's first transport being overblown, he summoned up his whole resolution, and reflected upon his own ruin, with that fortitude which had never failed him in the emergencies of his fate: little disturbed at the prognostick of the surgeon, which he considered in the right point of view: 'Sir,' said he, 'I am not so unacquainted with the resistance of an attorney's skull, as to believe the chastisement I have bestowed on him will at all endanger his life, which is in much greater jeopardy from the hands of the common executioner; for, notwithstanding this accident, I am determined to prosecute the rascal for robbery, with the utmost severity of the law; and that I may have a sufficient fund left for that prosecution, I shall not at present throw away one farthing in unnecessary expence, but insist upon being conveyed to prison without farther delay.'

This declaration was equally unwelcome to the bailiff, surgeon, and solicitor; who, upon the supposition that the count was a person of fortune, and would rather part with an immense sum, than incur the ignominy of a gaol, or involve himself in another disgraceful law-suit, had resolved to fleece him to the utmost of their power. But, now the attorney finding him determined to set his fate at defiance, and to retort upon him a prosecution which he had no mind to undergo, began to repent heartily of the provocation he had given, and to think seriously on some method

method to overcome the obstinacy of the incensed foreigner. With this view, while the bailiff conducted him to bed in another apartment, he desired the catchpole to act the part of mediator between him and the count, and furnished him with proper instructions for that purpose. Accordingly, the landlord on his return, told Fathom that he was sure the solicitor was not a man for this world; for that he had left him deprived of his senses, and praying to God with great devotion, for mercy to his murderer: he then exhorted him with many protestations of friendship, to compromise the unhappy affair by exchanging releases with the attorney before his delirium should be known, otherwise he would bring himself into a most dangerous premunire, whether the plaintiff should die of his wound, or live to prosecute him for the assault. 'And with regard to your charge of robbery against him,' said he, 'as it is no more than a bare suspicion, unsupported by the least shadow of evidence, the bill would be thrown out, and then he might sue you for damages. I therefore, out of pure friendship and good nature, advise you to compromise the affair, and if you think proper, will endeavour to bring about a mutual release.'

Our hero, whose passion was by this time pretty well cooled, saw reason for assenting to the proposal; upon which the deed was immediately executed, the mediator's bill was discharged, and Ferdinand conveyed in a hackney-coach to prison, after he had impowered his own landlord to discharge his servants, and convert his effects into ready-money. Thus he saw himself, in the course of a few hours, deprived of his reputation, rank, liberty, and friends; and his fortune reduced from two thousand pounds, to something less than two hundred, fifty of which he had carried to gaol in his pocket.

CHAP. IV.

OUR ADVENTURER IS MADE ACQUAINTED WITH A NEW SCENE OF LIFE.

JUST as he entered these mansions of misery, his ears were invaded with an hoarse and dreadful voice, exclaiming, 'You, Bess Beetle, score a

' couple of fresh eggs, a pennyworth
' of butter, and half a pint of moun-
' tain to the king, and stop credit till
' the bill is paid; he is now debtor for
' fifteen shillings and sixpence, and damn
' me if I trust him one farthing more,
' if he was the best king in Christen-
' dom: and d'ye hear, send Ragged-
' head with five pounds of potatoes for
' Major Macleaver's supper, and let him
' have what drink he wants; the fat
' widow gentlewoman from Pimlico
' has promised to quit his score. Sir
' Mungo Barebones may have some
' hasty-pudding and small-beer, though
' I don't expect to see his coin, no more
' than to receive the eighteen pence I
' laid out for a pair of breeches to his
' backside. What then? he's a quiet
' sort of a body, and a great scholar,
' and it was a scandal to the place, to
' see him going about in that naked
' condition: as for the mad Frenchman
' with the beard, if you give him so
' much as a cheese-paring, you b—ch,
' I'll send you back to the hole among
' your old companions; an impudent
' dog! I'll teach him to draw his sword
' upon the governor of an English
' prison. What! I suppose he thought
' he had to do with a French hang-
' tang-dang, rabbit him! he shall eat
' his white feather before I give him
' credit for a morsel of bread.'

Although our adventurer was very little disposed, at this juncture, to make observations foreign to his own affairs, he could not help taking notice of these extraordinary injunctions; especially those concerning the person who was intitled king, whom, however, he supposed to be some prisoner elected as the magistrate by the joint suffrage of his fellows. Having taken possession of his chamber, which he rented at five shillings a week, and being ill at ease in his own thoughts, he forthwith secured his door, undressed, and went to bed; in which, though it was none of the most elegant or inviting couches, he enjoyed profound repose after the accumulated fatigues and mortifications of the day. Next morning, after breakfast, the keeper entered his apartment, and gave him to understand, that the gentlemen under his care, having heard of the count's arrival, had deputed one of their number to wait upon him with the compliments of condolance, suitable to the occasion, and invite him to become
a member

a member of their society. Our hero could not politely dispense with this instance of civility, and their ambassador being instantly introduced by the name of Captain Minikin, saluted him with great solemnity.

This was a person equally remarkable for his extraordinary figure and address; his age seemed to border upon forty; his stature amounted to five feet; his visage was long, meagre, and weather-beaten; and his aspect, though not quite rueful, exhibited a certain formality, which was the result of care and conscious importance. He was very little encumbered with flesh and blood; yet, what body he had, was well-proportioned, his limbs were elegantly turned, and by his carriage he was well intitled to that compliment which we pay to any person, when we say he has very much the air of a gentleman. There was also an evident singularity in his dress, which, though intended as an improvement, appeared to be an extravagant exaggeration of the mode, and at once evinced him an original to the discerning eyes of our adventurer, who received him with his usual complaisance, and made a very eloquent acknowledgment of the honour and satisfaction he received from the visit of the representative, and the hospitality of his constituents. The captain's peculiarities were not confined to his external appearance; for his voice resembled the sound of a bassoon, or the aggregate hum of a whole bee-hive; and his discourse was almost nothing else than a series of quotations from the English poets, interlarded with French phrases, which he retained for their significance, on the recommendation of his friends, being himself unacquainted with that or any other outlandish tongue.

Fathom finding this gentleman of a very communicative disposition, thought he could not have a fairer opportunity of learning the history of his fellow-prisoners; and turning the conversation on that subject, was not disappointed in his expectation. 'I don't doubt, Sir,' said he, with the utmost solemnity of declamation, 'but you look with horror upon every object that surrounds you in this uncomfortable place; but nevertheless here are some, who, as my friend Shakespeare has it, "have seen better days, and have with holy bell been knolled to church; and

"sat at good men's feasts, and wiped their eyes of drops that sacred pity hath engendered." You must know, Sir, that exclusive of the *canaille* or the *profanum vulgus*, as they are stiled by Horace, there are several small communities in the prison consisting of people who are attracted by the manners and dispositions of each other: for this place, Sir, is quite a microcosm, and as the great world, so is this a "stage, and all the men and women merely players." For my own part, Sir, I have always made it a maxim to associate with the best company I can find: not that I pretend to boast of my family or extraction; because you know, as the poet says, *vix ea nostra voco*. My father, 'tis true, was a man that piqued himself upon his pedigree, as well as upon his politesse and personal merit; for he had been a very old officer in the army, and I myself may say I was born with a spontoon in my hand. Sir, I have had the honour to serve his majesty these twenty years, and have been bandied about in the course of duty, through all the British plantations, and you see the recompence of all my service. But this is a disagreeable subject, and therefore I shall wave it: however, as Butler observes,

"My only comfort is, that now
"My dubbolt fortune is so low,
"That either it must quickly end,
"Or turn about again and mend."

'And now to return from this digression, you will perhaps be surprized to hear that the head or chairman of our club is really a sovereign prince. No less, I'll assure you, than the celebrated Theodore, King of Corfica, who lies in prison for a debt of a few hundred pounds. *Heu! quantum mutatus ab illo*. It is not my business to censure the conduct of my superiors; but I always speak my mind in a cavalier manner, and as, according to the Spectator, talking to a friend is no more than thinking aloud, *entre nous*, his Corfican majesty has been scurvily treated by a certain administration: be that as it will, he is a personage of a very portly appearance, and is quite master of the *bienveillance*. Besides, they will find it their interest to have recourse again

again to his alliance; and in that case some of us may expect to profit by his restoration: but few words are best.

He that maintains the second rank in our assembly, is one Major Mac-leaver, an Irish gentleman, who has served abroad: a soldier of fortune, Sir, a man of unquestionable honour and courage; but a little over-bearing, in consequence of his knowledge and experience. He is a person of a good address, to be sure, and quite free of the *mauvaise honte*; and he may have seen a good deal of service: but what then; other people may be as good as he, though they have not had such opportunities. If he speaks five or six languages, he does not pretend to any taste in the liberal arts, which are the criterion of an accomplished gentleman. The next is Sir Mungo Barebones, the representative of a very ancient family in the North; his affairs are very much *derangée*, but he is a gentleman of great probity and learning, and at present engaged in a very grand scheme, which, if he can bring it to bear, will render him famous to all posterity: no less than the conversion of the Jews and the Gentiles. The project, I own, looks chimerical to one who has not conversed with the author; but, in my opinion, he has clearly demonstrated, from an anagrammatical analysis of a certain Hebrew word, that his present majesty, whom God preserve! is the person pointed at in Scripture as the temporal Messiah of the Jews; and if he could once raise by subscription such a trifling sum as twelve hundred thousand pounds, I make no doubt but he would accomplish his aim, vast and romantick as it seems to be.

Besides these, we have another messmate, who is a French chevalier, an odd sort of a man, a kind of Lazarillo De Tormes, a caricatura; he wears a long beard, pretends to be a great poet, and makes a damned *fracas* with his verses. The king has been obliged to exert his authority over him more than once, by ordering him into close confinement, for which he was so rash as to send his majesty a challenge; but he afterwards made his submission, and was again taken into favour: the truth is, I believe his brain is a little disordered, and he

being a stranger, we overlook his extravagancies.

Sir, we shall think ourselves happy in your accession to our society: you will be under no sort of restraint; for, though we dine at one table, every individual calls and pays for his own mess. Our conversation, such as it is, will not, I hope, be disagreeable; and though we have not opportunities of breathing the pure Arcadian air, and cannot "under the shade of melancholy boughs, lose and neglect the creeping hours of time," we may enjoy ourselves over a glass of punch or a dish of tea: nor are we destitute of friends, who visit us in these shades of distress. The major has a numerous acquaintance of both sexes; among others, a first-cousin of good fortune, who, with her daughters, often cheer our solitude: she is a very sensible lady-like gentlewoman; and the young ladies have a certain *degagée* air, that plainly shews they have seen the best company. Besides, I will venture to recommend Mrs. Minikin, as a woman of tolerable breeding and capacity; who, I hope, will not be found altogether deficient in the accomplishments of the sex. So that we find means to make little parties, in which the time glides away insensibly. Then I have a small collection of books, which are at your service. You may amuse yourself with Shakespeare, or Milton, or Don Quixote, or any of our modern authors that are worth reading; such as the Adventures of Loveill, Lady Frail, George Edwards, Joe Thompson, Bampfylde More Carew, Young Scarron, and Miss Betsy Thoughtless: and if you have a taste for drawing, I can entertain you with a parcel of prints by the best masters.

A man of our hero's politeness, could not help expressing himself in the warmest terms of gratitude for this courteous declaration. He thanked the captain in particular for his obliging offers, and begged he would be so good as to present his respects to the society, of which he longed to be a member. It was determined, therefore, that Minikin should return in an hour, when the count would be dressed, in order to conduct him into the presence of his majesty; and he had already taken his leave for the present

when

when all of a sudden he came back, and taking hold of a waistcoat that lay upon a chair, 'Sir,' said he, 'give me leave to look at that fringe? I think it is the most elegant knitting I ever saw! But pray, Sir, are not these quite out of fashion: I thought plain silk, such as this that I wear, had been the mode; with the pockets very low.' Before Fathom had time to make any sort of reply, he took notice of his hat and pumps; the first of which he said was too narrow in the brims, and the last an inch too low in the heels: indeed, they formed a remarkable contrast with his own; for, exclusive of the fashion of the cock, which resembled the form of a Roman galley, the brim of his hat, if properly spread, would have projected a shade sufficient to shelter a whole file of musqueteers from the heat of a summer's sun; and the heels of his shoes were so high, as to raise his feet three inches at least from the surface of the earth.

Having made these observations for the credit of his taste, he retired; and returning at the time appointed, accompanied Ferdinand to the apartment of the king, at the doors of which their ears were invaded with a strange sound, being that of a human voice imitating the noise of a drum. The captain hearing this alarm, made a full stop, and giving the count to understand that his majesty was busy, begged he would not take it amiss, if the introduction should be delayed for a few moments. Fathom, curious to know the meaning of what he had heard, applied to his guide for information, and learned that the king and the major, whom he had nominated to the post of his general in chief, were employed in landing troops upon the Genoese territory: that is, they were settling before-hand the manner of their disembarkation.

He then, by the direction of his conductor, reconnoitred them through the key-hole, and perceived the sovereign and his minister sitting on opposite sides of a deal-board table, covered with a large chart or map, upon which he saw a great number of mussel and oyster-shells, ranged in a certain order, and at a little distance several regular squares and columns made of cards cut in small pieces. The prince himself, whose eyes were reinforced by spectacles, surveyed this armament with great attention, while

the general put the whole in action, and conducted their motions by beat of drum. The muscle-shells, according to Minikin's explanation, represented the transports, the oyster-shells were considered as the men of war that covered the troops in landing, and the pieces of card exhibited the different bodies into which the army was formed upon its disembarkation.

As an affair of such consequence could not be transacted without opposition, they had provided divers ambuscades, consisting of the enemy, whom they represented by grey-pease; and accordingly, General Macleaver perceiving the said grey-pease marching along shore, to attack his forces before they could be drawn up in battalia, thus addressed himself to the oyster-shells in an audible voice: 'You men of war! don't you see the front of the enemy advancing, and the rest of the detachment following out of sight? Arrah! the devil burn you, why don't you come ashore and open your batteries?' So saying, he pushed the shells towards the breach, performed the cannonading with his voice; the grey-pease were soon put in confusion, the general was beat, the cards marched forwards in order of battle; and the enemy having retreated with great precipitation, they took possession of their ground without farther difficulty.

CHAP. V.

HE CONTEMPLATES MAJESTY AND IT'S SATELLITES IN ECLIPSE.

THIS expedition being happily finished, General Macleaver put the whole army, navy, transports, and scene of action, into a canvas bag; the prince unsaddled his nose, and Captain Minikin being admitted, our hero was introduced in form. Very gracious was the reception he met with from his majesty; who, with a most princely demeanour, welcomed him to court, and even seated him on his right-hand, in token of particular regard. True it is, this presence-chamber was not so superb, nor the appearance of the king so magnificent, as to render such an honour intoxicating to any person of our hero's coolness and discretion: in lieu of tapestry, the apartment was hung with half-

halfpenny ballads; a truckle-bed without curtains, supplied the place of a canopy; and, instead of a crown, his majesty wore a woollen night-cap. Yet, in spite of these disadvantages, there was an air of dignity in his deportment, and a nice physiognomist would have perceived something majestick in the features of his countenance.

He was certainly a personage of a very prepossessing mien; his manners were engaging, his conversation agreeable, and any man whose heart was subject to the meltings of humanity, would have deplored his distress and looked upon him as a most pathetic instance of that miserable reverse to which all human grandeur is exposed. His fall was even greater than that of Belisarius; who, after having obtained many glorious victories over the enemies of his country, is said to have been reduced to such extremity of indigence, that in his old age, when he was deprived of his eye-sight, he sat upon the highway like a common mendicant, imploring the charity of passengers, in the piteous exclamation of '*Daiobelum Belisario*;' that is, 'Spare a farthing to your poor old soldier Belisarius.' I say, this general's disgrace was not so remarkable as that of Theodore, because he was the servant of Justinian, consequently his fortune depended upon the nod of that emperor; whereas the other actually possessed the throne of sovereignty by the best of all titles, namely, the unanimous election of the people over whom he reigned; and attracted the eyes of all Europe, by the efforts he made in breaking the bands of oppression, and vindicating that liberty which is the birth-right of man.

The English of former days, alike renowned for generosity and valour, treated those hostile princes whose fate it was to wear their chains, with such delicacy of benevolence, as even dispelled the horrors of captivity; but their posterity of this refined age, feel no compunction at seeing an unfortunate monarch, their former friend, ally, and partizan, languish amidst the miseries of a loathsome gaol, for a paltry debt contracted in their own service. But moralizing apart; our hero had not long conversed with this extraordinary debtor, who in his present condition assumed no other title than that of Baron, than he perceived in him a spirit of

Quixotism, which all his experience, together with the vicissitudes of his fortune, had not been able to overcome; not that his ideas soared to such a pitch of extravagant hope as that which took possession of his messmates, who frequently quarrelled one with another about the degrees of favour to which they should be intitled after the king's restoration; but he firmly believed that affairs would speedily take such a turn in Italy, as would point out to the English court the expediency of employing him again; and this persuasion seemed to support him against every species of poverty and mortification.

While they were busy in trimming the balance of power on the other side of the Alps, their deliberations were interrupted by the arrival of a scullion, who came to receive their orders touching the bill of fare for dinner; and his majesty found much more difficulty in settling this important concern, than in compromising all the differences between the emperor and the Queen of Spain. At length, however, General Macleaver undertook the office of purveyor for his prince: Captain Minikin insisted upon treating the count; and in a little time the table was covered with a cloth, which, for the sake of my delicate readers, I shall not attempt to describe.

At this period they were joined by Sir Mungo Barebones; who having found means to purchase a couple of mutton chops, had cooked a mess of broth, which he now brought in a saucepan to the general rendezvous. This was the most remarkable object which had hitherto presented itself to the eyes of Fathom: being naturally of a meagre habit, he was by indigence and hard study wore almost to the bone, and so bended towards the earth, that in walking, his body described at least 150 degrees of a circle. The want of stockings and shoes he supplied with a jockey strait boot and a half jack. His thighs and middle were cased in a monstrous pair of brown trunk breeches, which the keeper bought for his use from the executor of a Dutch seaman, who had lately died in the gaol: his shirt retained no signs of it's original colour; his body was shrouded in an old greasy tattered plaid night-gown; a blue and white handkerchief surrounded his head; and his looks betokened that immense load of care which he had voluntarily incurred

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for the eternal salvation of sinners. Yet this figure, uncouth as it was, made his compliments to our adventurer in terms of the most elegant address, and in the course of conversation disclosed a great fund of valuable knowledge. He had appeared in the great world, and bore divers offices of dignity and trust with universal applause: his courage was undoubted, his morals were unimpeached, and his person held in great veneration and esteem; when his evil genius engaged him in the study of Hebrew, and the mysteries of the Jewish religion, which fairly disordered his brain, and rendered him incapable of managing his temporal affairs. When he ought to have been employed in the functions of his post, he was always rapt in visionary conferences with Moses on the Mount; rather than regulate the œconomy of his household, he chose to exert his endeavours in settling the precise meaning of the word *Elohim*; and having discovered that now the period was come, when the Jews and Gentiles would be converted, he postponed every other consideration, in order to facilitate that great and glorious event.

By this time, Ferdinand had seen every member of the club, except the French chevalier, who seemed to be quite neglected by the society; for his name was not once mentioned during this communication, and they sat down to dinner without asking whether he was dead or alive. The king regaled himself with a plate of ox-cheek; the major, who complained that his appetite had forsaken him, amused himself with some forty hard eggs, malaxed with salt butter; the knight indulged upon his soup and bouillie, and the captain entertained our adventurer with a neck of veal roasted, with potatoes; but before Fathom could make use of his knife and fork, he was summoned to the door, where he found the chevalier in great agitation, his eyes sparkling like coals of fire.

Our hero was not a little surprized at this apparition, who having asked pardon for the freedom he had used, observed, that understanding the count was a foreigner, he could not dispense with appealing to him, concerning an outrage he had suffered from the keeper, who, without any regard to his rank or misfortunes, had been base enough to

refuse him credit for a few necessaries, until he could have a remittance from his steward in France; he therefore conjured Count Fathom, as a stranger and nobleman like himself, to be the messenger of defiance, which he resolved to send to that brutal gaoler, that for the future he might learn to make proper distinctions in the exercise of his function.

Fathom, who had no inclination to offend this cholerick Frenchman, assured him that he might depend upon his friendship; and, in the mean time, prevailed upon him to accept of a small supply; in consequence of which, he procured a pound of sausages, and joined the rest of the company without delay; making a very suitable addition to such an assemblage of rarities. Though his age did not exceed thirty years, his beard, which was of a brindled hue, flowed down, like Aaron's, to his middle: upon his legs he wore red stockings rolled up over the joint of the knee; his breeches were of blue drab with velium button-holes, and garters of gold-lace; his waistcoat of scarlet, his coat of rusty black cloth, his hair twisted into a Ramellie hung down to his rump, of the colour of jet, and his hat was adorned with a white feather.

This original had formed many ingenious schemes to increase the glory and grandeur of France, but was discouraged by Cardinal Fleury; who, in all appearance, jealous of his great talents, not only rejected his projects, but even sent him to prison, on pretence of being offended at his impertinence. Perceiving that, like the Prophet, he had no honour in his own country, he no sooner obtained his release, than he retired to England; where he was prompted by his philanthropy to propose an expedient to our ministry, which would have saved a vast effusion of blood and treasure; this was, an agreement between the Queen of Hungary and the late emperor, to decide their pretensions by a single combat; in which case he offered himself as the Bavarian champion; but in this enterprize he also proved unsuccessful. Then turning his attention to the delights of poetry, he became so enamoured of the muse, that he neglected every other consideration; and she, as usual, gradually conducted him to the author's never-failing goal; a place of

of rest appointed for all those sinners, whom the profane love of poetry hath led astray.

CHAP. VI.

ONE QUARREL IS COMPROMISED;
AND ANOTHER DECIDED BY UN-
USUAL ARMS.

AMONG other topics of conversation that were discussed at this genial meeting, Sir Mungo's scheme was brought upon the carpet by his majesty, who was graciously pleased to ask how his subscription filled? To this interrogation the knight answered, that he met with great opposition from a spirit of levity and self-conceit, which seemed to prevail in this generation; but, that no difficulties should discourage him from persevering in his duty; and he trusted in God, that in a very little time he should be able to confute and overthrow the false philosophy of the moderns, and to restore the writings of Moses to that pre-eminence and veneration which is due to an inspired author. He spoke of the immortal Newton with infinite contempt, and undertook to extract from the Pentateuch, a system of chronology which would ascertain the progress of time since the fourth day of the creation to the present hour, with such exactness, that not one vibration of a pendulum should be lost! Nay, he affirmed that the perfection of all arts and sciences might be attained by studying these sacred memoirs; and that he himself did not despair of learning from them the art of transmuting baser metals into gold.

The chevalier, though he did not pretend to contradict these assertions, was too much attached to his own religion to acquiesce in the knight's project of converting the Jews and the Gentiles to the protestant heresy, which, he said, God Almighty would never suffer to triumph over the interests of his own holy catholic church. This objection produced abundance of altercation between two very unequal disputants; and the Frenchman, finding himself puzzled by the learning of his antagonist, had recourse to the *argumentum ad hominem*, by laying his hand upon his sword, and declaring that he was ready to lose the last drop of his blood in opposition to such a damnable scheme.

Sir Mungo, though in all appearance reduced to the last stage of animal existence, no sooner heard this epithet applied to his plan, than his eyes gleamed like lightning; he sprung from his seat, with the agility of a grass-hopper; and darting himself out at the door, like an arrow from a bow, re-appeared in a moment with a long rusty weapon, which might have been shewn among a collection of rarities as the sword of Guy Earl of Warwick. This implement he brandished over the chevalier's head, with the dexterity of an old prize-fighter, exclaiming in the French language, 'Thou art a prophane wretch marked out for the vengeance of Heaven, whose unworthy minister I am; and here thou shalt fall by the sword of the Lord and of Gideon.'

The chevalier, unterrified by this dreadful salutation, desired he would accompany him to a more convenient place: and the world might have been deprived of one or both these knights-errant, had not general Macleaver, at the desire of his majesty, interposed, and found means to bring matters to an accommodation.

In the afternoon, the society was visited by the major's cousin and her daughters, who no sooner appeared, than they were recognized by our adventurer; and his acquaintance with them renewed in such a manner, as alarmed the delicacy of Captain Minikin, who in the evening repaired to the count's apartment, and with a very formal physiognomy, accosted him in these words: 'Sir, I beg pardon for this intrusion; but I come to consult you about an affair in which my honour is concerned; and a soldier without honour, you know, is no better than a body without a soul. I have always admired that speech of Hotspur, in the first part of Henry the fourth.

"By Heaven, methinks it were an easy
"leap,
"To pluck bright honour from the pale-
"fac'd moon;
"Or dive into the bottom of the deep,
"Where fathom-line could never touch
"the ground,
"And pluck up drowned honour by the
"locks!"

'There is a boldness and ease in the
'expression, and the images are very
'picturesque. But without any farther

'preamble; pray, Sir, give me leave to ask how long you have been acquainted with those ladies who drank tea with us this afternoon? You will forgive the question, Sir, when I tell you that Major Macleaver introduced Mrs. Minikin to them as to ladies of character; and I do not know how, Sir, I have a sort of *presentiment* that my wife has been imposed upon. Perhaps I may be mistaken, and God grant I may! But there was a *je ne sçai quoy* in their behaviour to-day, which begins to alarm my suspicion. Sir, I have nothing but my reputation to depend upon; and I hope you'll excuse me when I earnestly beg to know what rank they maintain in life.'

Fathom, without minding the consequence, told him with a simper, that he knew them to be very good-natured ladies, who devoted themselves to the happiness of mankind. This explanation had no sooner escaped from his lips, than the captain's face began to glow with indignation, his eyes seemed bursting from their spheres, he swelled to twice his natural dimensions, and raising himself on his tiptoes, pronounced in a strain that emulated thunder, 'Blood, Sir! you seem to make very light of the matter; but it is no joke to me, I'll assure you: and Macleaver shall see that I am not to be affronted with impunity. Sir, I shall take it as a singular favour, if you will be the bearer of a billet to him, which I shall write in three words: nay, Sir, you must give me leave to insist upon it, as you are the only gentleman of our mess, whom I can intrust with an affair of this nature.'

Fathom, rather than run the risk of disobliging such a punctilious warrior, after having in vain attempted to dissuade him from his purpose, undertook to carry the challenge, which was immediately penned in these words.

'SIR,

'YOU have violated my honour, in imposing upon Mrs. Minikin your pretended cousins, as ladies of virtue and reputation; I therefore demand such satisfaction as a soldier ought to receive, and expect you will adjust with my friend Count Fathom,

'the terms upon which you shall be met by the much injured

'GOLIAH MINIKIN.'

This morceau being sealed and directed, was forthwith carried by our adventurer to the lodgings of the major, who had by this time retired to rest, but hearing the count's voice, he got up and opened the door *in cuerpo*, to the astonishment of Ferdinand, who had never before seen such an Herculean figure. He made an apology for receiving the count in his birth-day suit, to which, he said, he was reduced by the heat of his constitution, though he might have assigned a more adequate cause, by owning that his shirt was in the hands of his washerwoman; then shrouding himself in a blanket, desired to know what had procured him the honour of such an extraordinary visit. He read the letter with great composure, like a man accustomed to such intercourse; then addressing himself to the bearer, 'I will be after diverting the gentleman,' said he, 'in any manner he shall think proper; but, by Jesus! this is no place for such amusements: because, as you well know, my dear count, if both should be killed by the chance of war, neither of us will be able to escape; and after the breath is out of his body, he will make but a sorry excuse to his family and friends. But that is no concern of mine, and therefore I am ready to please him in his own way.'

Fathom approved of his remarks, which he reinforced with sundry considerations to the same purpose, and begged the assistance of the major's advice, in finding some expedient to terminate the affair without bloodshed, that no troublesome consequences might ensue either to him or to his antagonist, who in spite of this over-strained formality, seemed to be a person of worth and good-nature. 'With all my heart!' said the generous Hibernian, 'I have a great regard for the little man; and my own character is not to seek at this time of day. I have served a long apprenticeship to fighting, as this same carcass can testify; and if he compels me to run him through the body, by my shoul I shall do it in a friendly manner.'

So saying, he threw aside the blanket, and displayed scars and seams innumerable upon his body, which appeared like an old patched leathern doublet. "I remember," proceeded this champion, "when I was a slave at Algiers, Murphy Macmorris and I happened to have some difference in the bagnio; upon which he bade me turn out. "Arra, for what?" said I; "here are no weapons that a gentleman can use, and you would not be such a negro as to box like an English carman." After he had puzzled himself for some time, he proposed that we should retire into a corner, and funk one another with brimstone, till one of us should give out. Accordingly we crammed half a dozen of tobacco-pipes with sulphur, and setting foot to foot, began to smoak, and kept a constant fire, until Macmorris dropped down; then I threw away my pipe, and taking poor Murphy in my arms, "What, are you dead?" said I: "if you are dead, speak."—"No, by Jesus!" cried he, "I a'n't dead, but I am speechless." So he owned I had obtained the victory, and we were as good friends as ever. Now, if Mr. Minikin thinks proper to put the affair upon the same issue, I will smoke a pipe of brimstone with him to-morrow morning; and if I cry out first, I will be after asking pardon for this supposed affront."

Fathom could not help laughing at the proposal, to which, however, he objected, on account of Minikin's delicate constitution, which might suffer more detriment from breathing in an atmosphere of sulphur, than from the discharge of a pistol, or the thrust of a small-sword. He therefore suggested another expedient in lieu of the sulphur, namely, the gum called *assa-fœtida*; which, though abundantly nauseous, could have no effect upon the infirm texture of the lieutenant's lungs. This hint being relished by the major, our adventurer returned to his principal, and having repeated the other's arguments against the use of mortal instruments, described the succedaneum which he had concerted with Macleaver. The captain at first believed this scheme was calculated for subjecting him to the ridicule of his fellow-prisoners, and began to storm with great violence; but

by the assurances and address of Fathom, he was at length reconciled to the plan, and preparations were made on each side for this duel, which was actually smoaked next day, about noon, in a small closet, detached from the challenger's apartment, and within hearing of his majesty and all his court, assembled as witnesses and umpires of the contest.

The combatants being locked up together, began to ply their engines with great fury, and it was not long before Captain Minikin perceived he had a manifest advantage over his antagonist. For his organs were familiarized to the effluvia of this drug, which he had frequently used in the course of an hypochondriack disorder; whereas Macleaver, who was a stranger to all sorts of medicine, by his wry faces and attempts to puke, expressed the utmost abhorrence of the smell that invaded his nostrils. Nevertheless, resolved to hold out to the last extremity, he continued in action until the closet was filled with such an intolerable vapour as discomposed the whole œconomy of his entrails, and compelled him to disgorge his breakfast in the face of his opponent, whose nerves were so disconcerted by this disagreeable and unforeseen discharge, that he fell back into his chair in a swoon, and the major bellowed aloud for assistance. The door being opened, he ran directly to the window, to inhale the fresh air, while the captain recovering from his fit, complained of Macleaver's unfair proceedings, and demanded justice of the arbitrators, who decided in his favour; and the major being prevailed upon to ask pardon for having introduced Mrs. Minikin to women of rotten reputation, the parties were reconciled to each other, and peace and concord re-established in the mess.

Fathom acquired universal applause for his discreet and humane conduct upon this occasion; and that same afternoon had an opportunity of seeing the lady in whose cause he had exerted himself. He was presented to her as the husband's particular friend; and when she understood how much she was indebted to his care and concern for the captain's safety, she treated him with uncommon marks of distinction; and he found her a genteel well-bred woman, not without a good share of personal charms,

charms, and a well-cultivated understanding.

CHAP. VII.

AN UNEXPECTED RENCONTRE, AND AN HAPPY REVOLUTION IN THE AFFAIRS OF OUR ADVENTURER.

AS she did not lodge within the precincts of this garrison, she was one day, after tea, conducted to the gate by the captain and the count, and just as they approached the turnkey's lodge, our hero's eyes were struck with the apparition of his old companion Renaldo, son of his benefactor and patron the Count De Melville. What were the emotions of his soul, when he saw that young gentleman enter the prison, and advance towards him, after having spoke to the gaoler! He never doubted, that being informed of his confinement, he was come to upbraid him with his villainy and ingratitude, and he in vain endeavoured to recollect himself from that terror and guilty confusion which his appearance had inspired; when the stranger lifting up his eyes, started back with signs of extreme amazement, and after a considerable pause, exclaimed, 'Heaven and earth! Sure my eyes do not deceive me! Is not your name Fathom? It is, it must be my old friend and companion, the loss of whom I have so long regretted!' With these words, he ran towards our adventurer; and while he clasped him in his arms with all the eagerness of affection, protested that this was one of the happiest days he had ever seen.

Ferdinand, who from this salutation concluded himself still in possession of Renaldo's good opinion, was not deficient in expressions of tenderness and joy; he returned his embraces with equal ardour, the tears trickled down his cheeks, and that perturbation which proceeded from conscious perfidy and fear, was mistaken by the unsuspecting Hungarian for the sheer effects of love, gratitude, and surprize. These first transports having subsided, they adjourned to the lodgings of Fathom, who soon recollected his spirits and invention so well as to amuse the other with a feigned tale of his having been taken by the

French, sent prisoner into Champaigne, from whence he had written many letters to Count Melville and his son, of whom he could hear no tidings; of his having contracted an intimacy with a young nobleman of France, who died in the flower of his age, after having, in token of friendship, bequeathed to him a considerable legacy; by this he had been enabled to visit the land of his forefathers in the character of a gentleman, which he had supported with some figure, until he was betrayed into a misfortune that exhausted his funds, and drove him to the spot where he was now found; and he solemnly declared, that far from forgetting the obligation he owed to Count Melville, or renouncing the friendship of Renaldo, he had actually resolved to set out for Germany, on his return to the house of his patron, in the beginning of the week posterior to that in which he had been arrested.

Young Melville, whose own heart had never known the instigations of fraud, implicitly believed the story and protestations of Fathom; and though he would not justify that part of his conduct by which the term of his good fortune was abridged, he could not help excusing an indiscretion into which he had been hurried by the precipitancy of youth, and the allurements of an artful woman: nay, with the utmost warmth of friendship, he undertook to wait upon Trapwell, and endeavour to soften him into some reasonable terms of composition.

Fathom seemed to be quite overwhelmed with a deep sense of all this goodness, and affected the most eager impatience to know the particulars of Renaldo's fate since their unhappy separation, more especially his errand to this uncomfortable place, which he should henceforth revere as the providential scene of their re-union: nor did he forget to enquire, in the most affectionate and dutiful manner, about the situation of his noble parents and amiable sister.

At mention of these names, Renaldo, fetching a deep sigh, 'Alas, my friend!' said he, 'the count is no more; and what aggravates my affliction for the loss of such a father, it was my misfortune to be under his displeasure at the time of his death. Had I been present on that melancholy occasion, so well I knew his generosity and paternal tenderness, that sure I am, he would in his last moments have for-
' given

‘ given an only son whose life had been
 ‘ a continual effort to render himself
 ‘ worthy of such a parent, and whose
 ‘ crime was no other than an honour-
 ‘ able passion for the most meritorious
 ‘ of her sex. But I was removed at a
 ‘ fatal distance from him, and doubt-
 ‘ less my conduct must have been invi-
 ‘ diously misrepresented. Be that as it
 ‘ will, my mother has again given her
 ‘ hand in wedlock to Count Trevasi;
 ‘ by whom I have the mortification to
 ‘ be informed that I am totally exclud-
 ‘ ed from my father’s succession; and I
 ‘ learn from other quarters, that my
 ‘ sister is barbarously treated by this in-
 ‘ human father-in-law. Grant, Hea-
 ‘ ven, I may soon have an opportunity
 ‘ of expostulating with the tyrant upon
 ‘ that subject.’

So saying, his cheeks glowed, and his eyes lightened with resentment. Then he thus proceeded.

‘ My coming hither to-day, was with
 ‘ a view to visit a poor female relation,
 ‘ from whom I yesterday received a let-
 ‘ ter, describing her most deplorable
 ‘ situation, and soliciting my assistance:
 ‘ but the turnkey affirms, that there is
 ‘ no such person in the gaol; and I was
 ‘ on my way to consult the keeper,
 ‘ when I was agreeably surprized with
 ‘ the sight of my dear Fathom.’

Our adventurer having wiped from his eyes the tears which were produced by the news of his worthy patron’s death, desired to know the name of that afflicted prisoner, in whose behalf he interested himself so much; and Renaldo produced the letter, subscribed—‘ your
 ‘ unfortunate cousin, Helen Melville.’ This pretended relation, after having explained the degree of consanguinity which she and the count stood in to each other, and occasionally mentioned some anecdotes of the family in Scotland, gave him to understand, that she had married a merchant of London, who, by repeated losses in trade, had been reduced to indigence, and afterwards confined in prison, where he then lay a breathless corpse, having left her in the utmost extremity of wretchedness and want, with two young children in the small-pox, and an incurable cancer in one of her own breasts. Indeed, the picture she drew was so moving, and her expressions so sensibly pathetick, that no person whose heart was not alto-

gether callous, could peruse it without emotion. Renaldo had sent two guineas by the messenger, whom she had represented as a trusty servant, whose fidelity had been proof against all the distress of her mistress: and he was now arrived, in order to reinforce his bounty.

Fathom, in the consciousness of his own practices, immediately comprehended the scheme of this letter, and confidently assured him, that no such person resided in the prison, or in any other place; and when his friend applied for information to the keeper, these assurances were confirmed; and that stern janitor told him, he had been imposed upon by a stale trick which was often practised upon strangers, by a set of sharpers, who make it their business to pick up hints of intelligence relating to private families, upon which they build such superstructures of fraud and imposition.

However piqued the young Hungarian might be to find himself duped in this manner, he rejoiced at the occasion which had thrown Fathom in his way; and, after having made him a tender of his purse, took his leave, on purpose to wait upon Trapwell, who was not quite so untractable as an enraged cuckold commonly is; for, by this time, he had accomplished the best part of his aim, which was to be divorced from his wife, and was fully convinced that the defendant was no more than a needy adventurer, who in all probability would be released by an act of parliament for the benefit of insolvent debtors; in which case, he (the plaintiff) would reap no solid advantage from his imprisonment.

He therefore listened to the remonstrances of the mediator, and after much canvassing agreed to discharge the defendant in consideration of two hundred pounds, which were immediately paid by Count Melville, who by this deduction was reduced to somewhat less than thirty.

Nevertheless, he cheerfully begged himself in behalf of his friend, for whose release he forthwith obtained an order: and next day our adventurer having bid a formal adieu to his fellows in distress, and in particular to his majesty, for whose restoration his prayers were preferred, he quitted the gaol, and accom-

accompanied his deliverer, with all the outward marks of unutterable gratitude and esteem.

Surely, if his heart had been made of penetrable stuff, it would have been touched by the circumstances of this redemption: but, had not his soul been invincible to all such attacks, these Memoirs would, possibly, never have seen the light.

When they arrived at Renaldo's lodgings, that young gentleman honoured him with other proofs of confidence and friendship, by giving him a circumstantial detail of all the adventures in which he had been engaged after Fathom's desertion from the Imperial camp. He told him, that immediately after the war was finished, his father had pressed him to a very advantageous match, with which he would have complied, though his heart was not at all concerned, had not he been inflamed with the desire of seeing the world before he could take any step towards a settlement for life; that he had signified his sentiments on this head to the count, who opposed them with unusual obstinacy, as productive of a delay which might be fatal to his proposal; for which reason he had retired incognito from his family, and travelled through sundry states and countries in a disguise by which he eluded the enquiries of his parents.

That in the course of these peregrinations, he was captivated by the irresistible charms of a young lady, on whose heart he had the good fortune to make a tender impression: that their mutual love had subjected both to many dangers and difficulties, during which they suffered a cruel separation; after the torments of which, he had happily found her in England, where she now lived entirely cut off from her native country and connections, and destitute of every other resource but his honour, love, and protection; and, finally, that he was determined to combat his own desires, how violent soever they might be, until he should have made some suitable provision for the consequences of a stricter union with the mistress of his soul, that he might not by a precipitate marriage ruin the person whom he adored.

This end he proposed to attain, by an application to the court of Vienna, which, he did not doubt, would have some regard to his own service and that

of his father; and thither he resolved to repair with the first opportunity, now that he had found a friend with whom he could intrust the inestimable jewel of his heart.

He likewise gave our hero to understand, he had been eight months in England, during which he had lived in a frugal manner, that he might not unnecessarily exhaust the money he had been able to raise upon his own credit; that hitherto he had been obliged to defer his departure for Germany, on account of his attendance upon the mother of his mistress, who was lately dead of sorrow and chagrin; and that since he resided in London, he had often heard of the celebrated Count Fathom, though he never imagined that his friend Ferdinand could be distinguished by that appellation.

C H A P. VIII.

FATHOM JUSTIFIES THE PROVERB,
'WHAT'S BRED IN THE BONE
'WILL NEVER COME OUT OF
'THE FLESH.'

SOME circumstances of this conversation made a deep impression upon the mind of our adventurer; who, nevertheless, concealed his emotions from the knowledge of his friend, and was next day introduced to that hidden treasure, of which Renaldo had spoke with such rapture and adoration. It was not without reason he had expatiated upon the personal attractions of this young lady, whom (for the present) we shall call Monimia, a name that implies her orphan situation. When she entered the room, even Fathom, whose eyes had been sated with beauty, was struck dumb with admiration, and could scarce recollect himself so far as to perform the ceremony of his introduction.

She seemed to be about the age of eighteen: her stature was tall; her motion graceful; a knot of artificial flowers restrained the luxuriancy of her fine back hair that flowed in shining ringlets a-down her snowy neck. The contour of her face was oval; her forehead remarkably high; her complexion clean and delicate, though not florid; and her eyes were so piercing as to strike the soul of every beholder: yet, upon this occasion, one half of their vivacity was eclipsed

eclipsed by a languishing air of melancholy concern; which, while it in a manner sheathed the edge of her beauty, added a most engaging sweetness to her looks: in short, every feature was elegantly perfect; and the harmony of the whole ravishing and delightful.

It was easy to perceive the mutual sentiments of the two lovers, at meeting, by the pleasure that sensibly diffused itself in the countenances of both. Fathom was received by her as the intimate friend of her admirer, whom she had often heard of in terms of the most sincere affection; and the conversation was carried on in the Italian language, because she was a foreigner who had not as yet made great proficiency in the knowledge of the English tongue. Her understanding was such as, instead of diminishing, reinforced the prepossession which was inspired by her appearance; and if the sum total of her charms could not melt the heart, it at least excited the appetite of Fathom to such a degree, that he gazed upon her with such violence of desire, as had never transported him before; and instantly began to harbour thoughts not only destructive to the peace of his generous patron, but also to the prudential maxims he had adopted on his first entrance into life.

We have already recorded divers instances of his conduct, to prove that there was an intemperance in his blood, which often interfered with his caution: and although he had found means to render this heat sometimes subservient to his interest; yet, in all probability, Heaven mingled the ingredient in his constitution, on purpose to counteract his consummate craft, defeat the villainy of his intention, and at last expose him to the justice of the law, and the contempt of his fellow-creatures.

Stimulated as he was by the beauty of the incomparable Monimia, he foresaw that the conquest of her heart would cost him a thousand times more labour and address than all the victories he had ever achieved: for, besides her superior understanding, her sentiments of honour, virtue, gratitude, religion, and pride of birth, her heart was already engaged by the tenderest ties of love and obligation, to a man whose person and acquired accomplishments at least equalled his own; and whose connection with him was of such a nature, as raised an almost insurmountable bar to his de-

sign; because, with what face could he commence rival to the person whose family had raised him from want and servility, and whose own generosity had rescued him from the miseries of a dreary gaol.

Notwithstanding these reflections, he would not lay aside an idea which so agreeably flattered his imagination. He, like every other projector in the same circumstances, was so partial to his own qualifications, as to think the lady would soon perceive a difference between him and Renaldo, that could not fail to turn to his advantage in her opinion. He depended a good deal on the levity and inconstancy of the sex; and did not doubt, that, in the course of their acquaintance, he should profit by that languor which often creeps upon and flattens the intercourse of lovers cloyed with the sight and conversation of each other.

This way of arguing was very natural to a man who had never known other motives than those of sensuality and convenience; and, perhaps, upon these maxims, he might have succeeded with nine-tenths of the fair-sex: but, for once, he erred in his calculation. Monimia's soul was perfect; her virtue impregnable. His first approaches were, as usual, performed by the method of insinuation, which succeeded so well, that in a few days, he actually acquired a very distinguished share of her favour and esteem; to this he had been recommended in the warmest strain of exaggerating friendship, by her dear Renaldo; so that placing the most unreserved confidence in his honour and integrity, and being almost quite destitute of acquaintance, she made no scruple of owning herself pleased with his company and conversation; and therefore he was never abridged in point of opportunity. She had too much discernment to overlook his uncommon talents and agreeable address, and too much susceptibility to observe them with indifference. She not only regarded him as the confident of her lover, but admired him as a person whose attachment did honour to Count Melville's choice; she found his discourse remarkably entertaining, his politeness dignified with an air of uncommon sincerity; and she was ravished with his skill in musick, an art of which she was deeply enamoured.

While he thus ingratiated himself with the fair Monimia, Renaldo rejoiced at their intimacy, being extremely happy

in the thought of having found a friend who could amuse and protect the dear creature in his absence. That she might be the better prepared for the temporary separation which he meditated, he began to be less frequent in his visits, or rather to interrupt by gradual intermissions the constant attendance he had bestowed upon her since her mother's death. This alteration she was enabled to bear by the assiduities of Fathom, when she understood that her lover was indispensibly employed in negotiating a sum of money for the purposes of his intended voyage. This was really the case: for, as the reader hath been already informed, the provision he had made for that emergency was expended in behalf of our adventurer; and the persons of whom he had borrowed it, far from approving of the use to which it was put, and accommodating him with a fresh supply, reproached him with his benevolence as an act of dishonesty to them; and, instead of favouring this second application, threatened to distress him for what he had already received. While he endeavoured to surmount these difficulties, his small reverſion was quite exhausted, and he saw himself on the brink of wanting the common necessities of life.

There was no difficulty which he could not have encountered with fortitude, had he alone been concerned; but his affection and regard for Monimia were of such a delicate nature, that, far from being able to bear the prospect of her wanting the least convenience, he could not endure that she should suspect her situation cost him a moment's perplexity; because he foresaw it would wring her gentle heart with unspeakable anguish and vexation. This, therefore, he endeavoured to anticipate, by expressions of confidence in the emperor's equity, and frequent declarations touching the goodness and security of that credit from which he derived his present subsistence.

CHAP. IX.

ANECDOTES OF POVERTY, AND
EXPERIMENTS FOR THE BENEFIT
OF THOSE WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

HIS affairs being thus circumstanced, it is not to be supposed that he passed his time in tranquillity. Every

day ushered in new demands and fresh anxiety: for, though his economy was frugal, it could not be supported without money; and now not only his funds were drained, but also his private friends tired of relieving his domestick necessities. Nay, they began to relinquish his company, which formerly they had coveted; and those who still favoured him with their company, embittered that favour with disagreeable advice mingled with impertinent reproof. They loudly exclaimed against the last instance of his friendship for Fathom as a piece of wrong-headed extravagance, which neither his fortune could afford, nor his conscience excuse; and alledged, that such specimens of generosity are vicious in any man, let his finances be never so opulent, if he has any relations of his own who need his assistance; but altogether scandalous, not to say unjust, in a person who depends for his own support upon the favour of his friends.

These expostulations did not even respect the beauteous, the accomplished, the gentle-hearted, the orphan Monimia. Although they owned her perfections, and did not deny that it would be highly meritorious in any man of fortune to make her happy, they disapproved of Renaldo's attachment to the fair beggar, made light of that intimate union of hearts which subsisted between the two lovers, and which no human consideration could dissolve; and some among them, in the consummation of their prudence, ventured to hint a proposal of providing for her in the service of some lady of fashion.

Any reader of sensibility will easily conceive how these admonitions were relished by a young gentleman whose pride was indomitable, whose notions of honour were scrupulously rigid and romantick, whose temper was warm, and whose love was intense. Every such suggestion was as a dagger to his soul; and what rendered the torture more exquisite, he lay under obligations to those very persons, whose selfish and sordid sentiments he disdained: so that he was restricted by gratitude from giving vent to his indignation; and his forlorn circumstances would not permit him to renounce their acquaintance. While he struggled with these mortifications, his wants grew more and more importunate, and his creditors became clamorous.

Fathom, to whom all his grievances were

were disclosed, lamented his hard hap with all the demonstrations of sympathy which he could expect to find in such a zealous adherent; he upbraided himself incessantly as the cause of his patron's distress; took God to witness, that he would rather have perished in gaol, than have enjoyed his liberty, had he known it would have cost his dearest friend and benefactor one-tenth part of the anguish he now saw him suffer; and, in conclusion, the fervency of his affection glowed to such a degree, that he offered to beg, steal, or plunder on the highway, for Renaldo's assistance.

Certain it is, he might have recollected a less disagreeable expedient than any of these, to alleviate the pangs of this unhappy lover: for, at that very period, he was possessed of money and moveables to the amount of a much greater sum than that which was necessary to remove the severest pangs of the count's misfortune. But, whether he did not reflect upon this resource, or was willing to let Melville be better acquainted with adversity, which is the great school of life, I shall leave the reader to determine. Yet, so far was he from supplying the wants of the young Hungarian, that he did not scruple to receive a share of the miserable pittance which that gentleman made shift to extort from the complaisance of a few companions, whose countenance he still enjoyed.

Renaldo's life was now become a sacrifice to the most poignant distress; almost his whole time was engrossed by a double scheme, comprehending his efforts to render his departure practicable, and his expedients for raising the means of daily bread. With regard to the first, he exerted himself among a set of merchants, some of whom knew his family and expectations; and, for the last, he was fain to depend upon the assistance of a few intimates, who were not in condition to furnish him with sums of consequence. These, however, gradually dropped off, on pretence of friendly resentment for his indiscreet conduct; so that he found himself naked and deserted by all his former companions, except one gentleman, with whom he had lived in the most unrestrained correspondence, as with a person of the warmest friendship, and the most unbounded benevolence: nay, he had actually experienced repeated proofs of his generosity; and such were the count's

sentiments of the gratitude, love, and esteem, which were due to the author of these obligations, that he would have willingly laid down his own life for his interest or advantage. He had already been at different times accommodated by this benefactor, with occasional supplies, amounting in the whole to about forty or fifty pounds; and so fearful was he of taking any step by which he might forfeit the good-will of this gentleman, that he struggled with unparalleled difficulty and vexation, before he could prevail upon himself to put his liberality to another proof.

What maxims of delicacy will not the dire calls of necessity infringe! Reduced to the alternative of applying once more to that beneficence which had never failed him, or of seeing Monimia starve, he chose the first, as of two evils the least, and intrusted Fathom with a letter explaining the bitterness of his case. It was not without trepidation that he received in the evening, from his messenger, an answer to this billet: but what were his pangs when he learned the contents! The gentleman, after having professed himself Melville's sincere well-wisher, gave him to understand, that he was resolved for the future to detach himself from every correspondence which would be inconvenient for him to maintain; that he considered his intimacy with the count in that light: yet, nevertheless, if his distress was really as great as he had described it, he would still contribute something towards his relief, and accordingly had sent by the bearer five guineas for that purpose; but desired him to take notice, that, in so doing, he laid himself under some difficulty.

Renaldo's grief and mortification at this disappointment were unspeakable; he now saw demolished the last screen betwixt him and the extremity of indigence and woe; he beheld the mistress of his soul abandoned to the bleakest scenes of poverty and want; and he deeply resented the lofty strain of the letter, by which he conceived himself treated as a worthless spendthrift, and importunate beggar. Though his purse was exhausted to the last shilling; though he was surrounded with necessities and demands, and knew not how to provide another meal for his fair dependant, he, in opposition to all the suggestions and eloquence of Fathom, dispatched

him with the money and another billet, intimating, in the most respectful terms, that he approved of his friend's new-adopted maxim, which, for the future, he should always take care to remember; and that he had sent back the last instance of his bounty, as a proof how little he was disposed to incommode his benefactor.

This letter, though sincerely meant, and written in a very serious mood, the gentleman considered as an ungrateful piece of irony; and in that opinion complained to several persons of the count's acquaintance, who unanimously exclaimed against him as a sordid, unthankful, and profligate knave, that abused and reviled those very people who had generously befriended him, whenever they found it inconvenient to nourish his extravagance with farther supplies. Notwithstanding these accumulated oppressions, he still persevered with fortitude in his endeavours to disentangle himself from this maze of misery. To these he was encouraged by a letter which about this time he received from his sister, importing, that she had good reason to believe the real will of her father had been suppressed for certain sinister views; and desiring him to hasten his departure for Hungary, where he would still find some friends who were both able and willing to support his cause. He had some trinkets left; the pawn-brokers shop was still open; and hitherto he made shift to conceal from Monimia the extent of his affliction.

The money-broker whom he employed, after having amused him with a variety of schemes, which served no other purpose than that of protracting his own job, at length undertook to make him acquainted with a set of monied men who had been very adventurous in lending sums upon personal security; he was therefore introduced to their club in the most favourable manner, after the broker had endeavoured to prepossess them separately, with magnificent ideas of his family and fortune. By means of this anticipation, he was received with a manifest relaxation of that severity which people of this class mingle in their aspects to the world in general, and they even vied with each other in their demonstrations of hospitality and respect; for every one in particular looked upon

him as a young heir, who would bleed freely, and mortgage at cent. per cent.

Renaldo, buoyed up with these exterior civilities, began to flatter himself with hopes of success; which, however, were soon checked by the nature of the conversation; during which the chairman upbraided one of the members in open club, for having once lent forty pounds upon slight security: the person accused alledged in his own defence, that the borrower was his own kinsman, whose funds he knew to be sufficient; that he had granted his bond, and been at the expence of insuring his life for the money; and, in conclusion, had discharged it to the day with great punctuality. These allegations were not deemed exculpatory by the rest of the assembly, who with one voice pronounced him guilty of unwarrantable rashness and indiscretion, which, in time coming, must undoubtedly operate to the prejudice of his character and credit.

This was a bitter declaration to the young count; who, nevertheless, endeavoured to improve the footing he had gained among them, by courting their company, conforming to their manners, and attentively listening to their discourse. When he had cultivated them with great assiduity for the space of some weeks, dined at their houses upon pressing invitations, and received repeated offers of service and friendship, believing that things were now ripe for the purpose, he one day, at a tavern to which he had invited him to dinner, ventured to disclose his situation to him whose countenance was the least unpromising; and as he introduced the business with a proposal of borrowing money, he perceived his eyes sparkle with a visible alacrity, from which he drew an happy presage. But, alas! this was no more than a transient gleam of sunshine, which was suddenly obumbrated by the sequel of his explanation; inasmuch, that when the merchant understood the nature of the security, his visage was involved in a most disagreeable gloom, and his eyes distorted into a most hideous obliquity of vision: indeed, he squinted so horribly, that Renaldo was amazed and almost affrighted at his looks, until he perceived that this distortion proceeded from concern for a silver tobacco-box which he had laid down by him on the table, after having filled his pipe: as the

the youth proceeded to unfold his necessities, the other became gradually alarmed for this utensil, to which he darted his eyes askance in this preternatural direction, until he had slyly secured it in his pocket.

Having made this successful conveyance, he shifted his eyes alternately from the young gentleman to the broker, for a considerable pause, during which he in silence reproached the last for introducing such a beggerly varlet to his acquaintance; then taking the pipe from his mouth, 'Sir,' said he, addressing himself to the count, 'if I had all the inclination in the world to comply with your proposal, it is really not in my power: my correspondents abroad have remitted such a number of bad bills of late, that all my running cash hath been exhausted in supporting their credit.—Mr. Ferret, sure I am, you was not ignorant of my situation; and I am not a little surprized that you should bring the gentleman to me on business of this kind: but, as the wise man observes, *Bray a fool in a mortar, and he'll never be wise.*' So saying, with a most emphatick glance directed to the broker, he rung the bell, and called for the reckoning; when finding that he was to be the guest of Renaldo, he thanked him drily for his good cheer, and in an abrupt manner took himself away.

Though baffled in this quarter, the young gentleman would not despair; but forthwith employed Mr. Ferret in an application to another of the society; who, after having heard the terms of his commission, desired him to tell his principal, that he could do nothing without the concurrence of his partner, who happened to be at that time in one of our American plantations; a third being solicited, excused himself on account of an oath which he had lately taken on the back of a considerable loss; a fourth being tried, made answer, that it was not in his way; and a fifth candidly owned, that he never lent money without proper security.

Thus the forlorn Renaldo tried every experiment without success, and now saw the last ray of hope extinguished. Well nigh destitute of present support, and encompassed with unrelenting duns, he was obliged to keep within doors, and seek some comfort in the conversation of his charming mistress, and his

faithful friend: yet even there he experienced the extremest rigour of adverse fate. Every rap at the door alarmed him with the expectation of some noisy tradesman demanding payment; when he endeavoured to amuse himself with drawing, some unlucky feature of the occasional portrait recalled the image of an obdurate creditor, and made him tremble at the work of his own hands. When he fled for shelter to the flattering creation of fancy, some abhorred idea always started up amidst the gay vision, and dissolved the pleasing enchantment.

Even the seraphick voice of Monimia had no longer power to compose the anxious tumults of his mind: every song she warbled, every tune she played, recalled to his remembrance some scene of love and happiness elapsed, and overwhelmed his soul with the woeful comparison of past and present fate. He saw all that was amiable and perfect in woman, all that he held most dear and sacred upon earth, tottering on the brink of misery, without knowing the danger of her situation, and found himself unable to prevent her fall, or even to forewarn her of the peril; for, as we have already observed, his soul could not brook the thought of communicating the tidings of distress to the tender-hearted Monimia.

CHAP. X.

RENALDO'S DISTRESS DEEPENS, AND FATHOM'S PLOT THICKENS.

SUCH aggravated misfortune could not fail to affect his temper and deportment: the continual efforts he made to conceal his vexation produced a manifest distraction in his behaviour and discourse. He began to be seized with horror at the sight of poor Monimia, whom he therefore shunned as much as the circumstances of their correspondence would allow; and every evening he went forth alone to some solitary place, where he could, unperceived, give a loose to the transports of his sorrow, and in silence meditate some means to lighten the burden of his woe. His heart was sometimes so savaged with despair, which represented mankind as his inveterate enemies, that he entertained thoughts of denouncing war against the whole community, and supplying his

his own wants with the spoils he should win: at other times he was tempted with the desire of putting an end to his miseries and life together: yet these were but the transitory suggestions of temporary madness, that soon yielded to the dictates of reason. From the execution of the first he was restrained by his own notions of honour and morality; and from using the other expedient, he was deterred by his love for Monimia, together with the motives of philosophy and religion.

While in this manner he secretly nursed the worm of grief that preyed upon his vitals, the alteration in his countenance and conduct did not escape the eyes of that discerning young lady. She was alarmed at the change, yet afraid to enquire into the source of it; for, being ignorant of his distress, she could impute it to no cause in which her happiness was not deeply interested. She had observed his strained complaisance and extraordinary emotion: she had detected him in repeated attempts to avoid her company, and taken notice of his regular excursions in the dark. These were alarming symptoms to a lover of her delicacy and pride: she strove in vain to put the most favourable construction on what she saw; and finally, imputed the effects of his despondence to the alienation of his heart. Made miserable beyond expression by these suspicions, she imparted them to Fathom, who by this time was in full possession of her confidence and esteem, and implored his advice touching her conduct in such a nice conjuncture.

This artful politician, who rejoiced at the effect of her penetration, no sooner heard himself questioned on the subject, than he gave tokens of surprise and confusion, signifying his concern to find she had discovered what (for the honour of his friend) he wished had never come to light. His behaviour on this occasion confirmed her fatal conjecture; and she conjured him in the most pathetick manner to tell her if he thought Renaldo's heart had contracted any new engagement. At this question he started with signs of extreme agitation; and, stifling an artificial sigh, 'Sure, Madam,' said he, 'you cannot doubt the count's constancy! I am confident—he is certainly—I protest, Madam, I am so shocked——'

Here he made a full pause, as if the

conflict between his integrity and his friendship would not allow him to proceed, and summoned the moisture into either eye. 'Then are my doubts removed!' cried the afflicted Monimia: 'I see your candour in the midst of your attachment to Renaldo; and will no longer torment you with impertinent interrogations and vain complaints!' With these words, a flood of tears gushed from her enchanting eyes, and she instantly withdrew into her own apartment, where she indulged her sorrow to excess. Nor was her grief unanimated with resentment. She was by birth, nature, and education, inspired with that dignity of pride which ennobles the human heart; and this, by the circumstance of her present dependance, was rendered extremely jealous and susceptible; insomuch that she could not brook the least shadow of indifference, much less an injury of such a nature, from the man whom she had honoured with her affections, and for whom she had disobliged and deserted her family and friends.

Though her love was so unalterably fixed on this unhappy youth, that without the continuation of reciprocal regard her life would have become an unupportable burden, even amidst all the splendor of affluence and pomp; and although she foresaw, that when his protection should cease, she must be left a wretched orphan in a foreign land, exposed to all the miseries of want; yet, such was the loftiness of her displeasure, that she disdained to complain, or even demand an explanation from the supposed author of her wrongs.

While she continued undetermined in her purpose, and fluctuating on this sea of torture, Fathom, believing that now was the season for working upon her passions, while they were all in commotion, became, if possible, more assiduous than ever about the fair mourner, modelled his features into a melancholy cast, pretended to share her distress with the most emphatick sympathy, and endeavoured to keep her resentment glowing by cunning insinuations, which, though apparently designed to apologize for his friend, served only to aggravate the guilt of his perfidy and dishonour. This pretext of friendly concern, is the most effectual vehicle for the conveyance of malice and slander; and a man's reputation is never so mortally stabbed,

as

as when the assassin begins with the preamble of, 'For my own part, I can safely say, that no man upon earth has a greater regard for him than I have, and it is with the utmost anguish and concern that I see him misbehave in such a manner.' Then he proceeds to mangle his character; and the good-natured hearers concluding he is even blacker than he is represented, on the supposition that the most atrocious circumstances are softened or suppressed by the tenderness or friendship of the accuser, exclaim, 'Good luck! what a wretch he must be, when his best friends will no longer attempt to defend him!' Nay, sometimes these well-wishers undertake his defence, and treacherously betray the cause they have espoused, by omitting the reasons that may be urged in his vindication.

Both these methods were practised by the wily Ferdinand, according to the predominant passion of Monimia: when her indignation prevailed, he expiated upon his love and sincere regard for Renaldo, which, he said, had grown up from the cradle, to such a degree of fervour, that he would willingly part with life for his advantage. He shed tears for his apostacy; but every drop made an indelible stain upon his character; and, in the bitterness of his grief, swore, notwithstanding his fondness for Renaldo, which had become a part of his constitution, that the young Hungarian deserved the most infamous destiny, for having injured such perfection. At other times, when he found her melted into silent sorrow, he affected to excuse the conduct of his friend. He informed her, that the young gentleman's temper had been uneven from his infancy; that frailty was natural to man; that he might in time be reclaimed by self-conviction; he even hinted, that she might have probably ascribed to inconstancy what was really the effect of some chagrin which he industriously concealed from his participation: but, when he found her disposed to listen to this last suggestion, he destroyed the force of it, by recollecting the circumstances of his nocturnal rambles, which, he owned, would admit of no favourable construction.

By these means he blew the coals of her jealousy, and enhanced the value of his own character, at the same time; for she looked upon him as a mirror of faith

and integrity; and the mind being overcharged with woe, naturally seeks some confident, upon whose sympathy it can repose itself: indeed, his great aim was, to make himself necessary to her affliction, and settle a gossiping correspondence, in the familiarity of which he hoped his purpose would certainly be answered.

Yet the exertion of these talents was not limited to her alone. While he laid these trains for the hapless young lady, he was preparing snares of another kind for her unsuspecting lover, who (for the completion of his misery) about this time began to perceive marks of disquiet and displeasure in the countenance and deportment of his adored Monimia: for, that young lady, in the midst of her grief, remembered her origin, and over her vexation affected to throw a veil of tranquillity which served only to give an air of disgust to her internal disturbance.

Renaldo, whose patience and philosophy were barely sufficient to bear the load of his other evils, would have been quite overwhelmed with the additional burden of Monimia's woe, if it had not assumed this appearance of disesteem, which, as he knew he had not deserved it, brought his resentment to his assistance: yet this was but a wretched cordial to support him against the baleful reflections that assailed him from every quarter; it operated like those desperate remedies, which, while they stimulate exhausted nature, help to destroy the very fundamentals of the constitution. He reviewed his own conduct with the utmost severity, and could not recollect one circumstance which could justly offend the idol of his soul. The more blameless he appeared to himself in this examination, the less excusable did her behaviour appear. He tasked his penetration to discover the cause of this alteration; he burned with impatience to know it; his discernment failed him; and he was afraid (though he knew not why) to demand an explanation. His thoughts were so circumstanced, that he durst not even unbosom himself to Fathom, though his own virtue and friendship resisted those sentiments that began to intrude upon his mind, with suggestions to the prejudice of our adventurer's fidelity.

Nevertheless, unable to endure the torments of such interesting suspense, he at length made an effort to expostulate with

his own wants with the spoils he should win : at other times he was tempted with the desire of putting an end to his miseries and life together : yet these were but the transitory suggestions of temporary madness, that soon yielded to the dictates of reason. From the execution of the first he was restrained by his own notions of honour and morality ; and from using the other expedient, he was deterred by his love for Monimia, together with the motives of philosophy and religion.

While in this manner he secretly nursed the worm of grief that preyed upon his vitals, the alteration in his countenance and conduct did not escape the eyes of that discerning young lady. She was alarmed at the change, yet afraid to enquire into the source of it ; for, being ignorant of his distress, she could impute it to no cause in which her happiness was not deeply interested. She had observed his strained complaisance and extraordinary emotion : she had detected him in repeated attempts to avoid her company, and taken notice of his regular excursions in the dark. These were alarming symptoms to a lover of her delicacy and pride : she strove in vain to put the most favourable construction on what she saw ; and finally, imputed the effects of his despondence to the alienation of his heart. Made miserable beyond expression by these suspicions, she imparted them to Fathom, who by this time was in full possession of her confidence and esteem, and implored his advice touching her conduct in such a nice conjuncture.

This artful politician, who rejoiced at the effect of her penetration, no sooner heard himself questioned on the subject, than he gave tokens of surprize and confusion, signifying his concern to find she had discovered what (for the honour of his friend) he wished had never come to light. His behaviour on this occasion confirmed her fatal conjecture ; and she conjured him in the most pathetick manner to tell her if he thought Renaldo's heart had contracted any new engagement. At this question he started with signs of extreme agitation ; and, stifling an artificial sigh, ' Sure, Madam,' said he, ' you cannot doubt the count's constancy ! I am confident—he is certainly—I protest, Madam, I am so shocked——'

Here he made a full pause, as if the

conflict between his integrity and his friendship would not allow him to proceed, and summoned the moisture into either eye. ' Then are my doubts removed !' cried the afflicted Monimia : ' I see your candour in the midst of your attachment to Renaldo ; and will no longer torment you with impertinent interrogations and vain complaints !' With these words, a flood of tears gushed from her enchanting eyes, and she instantly withdrew into her own apartment, where she indulged her sorrow to excess. Nor was her grief unanimated with resentment. She was by birth, nature, and education, inspired with that dignity of pride which ennobles the human heart ; and this, by the circumstance of her present dependance, was rendered extremely jealous and susceptible ; insomuch that she could not brook the least shadow of indifference, much less an injury of such a nature, from the man whom she had honoured with her affections, and for whom she had disoblged and deserted her family and friends.

Though her love was so unalterably fixed on this unhappy youth, that without the continuation of reciprocal regard her life would have become an unupportable burden, even amidst all the splendor of affluence and pomp ; and although she foresaw, that when his protection should cease, she must be left a wretched orphan in a foreign land, exposed to all the miseries of want ; yet, such was the loftiness of her displeasure, that she disdained to complain, or even demand an explanation from the supposed author of her wrongs.

While she continued undetermined in her purpose, and fluctuating on this sea of torture, Fathom, believing that now was the season for working upon her passions, while they were all in commotion, became, if possible, more assiduous than ever about the fair mourner, modelled his features into a melancholy cast, pretended to share her distress with the most emphatick sympathy, and endeavoured to keep her resentment glowing by cunning insinuations, which, though apparently designed to apologize for his friend, served only to aggravate the guilt of his perfidy and dishonour. This pretext of friendly concern, is the most effectual vehicle for the conveyance of malice and slander ; and a man's reputation is never so mortally stabbed,

as when the assassin begins with the preamble of, 'For my own part, I can safely say, that no man upon earth has a greater regard for him than I have, and it is with the utmost anguish and concern that I see him misbehave in such a manner.' Then he proceeds to mangle his character; and the good-natured hearers concluding he is even blacker than he is represented, on the supposition that the most atrocious circumstances are softened or suppressed by the tenderness or friendship of the accuser, exclaim, 'Good lack! what a wretch he must be, when his best friends will no longer attempt to defend him!' Nay, sometimes these well-wishers undertake his defence, and treacherously betray the cause they have espoused, by omitting the reasons that may be urged in his vindication.

Both these methods were practised by the wily Ferdinand, according to the predominant passion of Monimia: when her indignation prevailed, he expatiated upon his love and sincere regard for Renaldo, which, he said, had grown up from the cradle, to such a degree of fervour, that he would willingly part with life for his advantage. He shed tears for his apostacy; but every drop made an indelible stain upon his character; and, in the bitterness of his grief, swore, notwithstanding his fondness for Renaldo, which had become a part of his constitution, that the young Hungarian deserved the most infamous destiny, for having injured such perfection. At other times, when he found her melted into silent sorrow, he affected to excuse the conduct of his friend. He informed her, that the young gentleman's temper had been uneven from his infancy; that frailty was natural to man; that he might in time be reclaimed by self-conviction; he even hinted, that she might have probably ascribed to inconsistency what was really the effect of some chagrin which he industriously concealed from his participation: but, when he found her disposed to listen to this last suggestion, he destroyed the force of it, by recollecting the circumstances of his nocturnal rambles, which, he owned, would admit of no favourable construction.

By these means he blew the coals of her jealousy, and enhanced the value of his own character, at the same time; for she looked upon him as a mirror of faith

and integrity; and the mind being overcharged with woe, naturally seeks some confident, upon whose sympathy it can repose itself: indeed, his great aim was, to make himself necessary to her affliction, and settle a gossiping correspondence, in the familiarity of which he hoped his purpose would certainly be answered.

Yet the exertion of these talents was not limited to her alone. While he laid these trains for the hapless young lady, he was preparing snares of another kind for her unsuspecting lover, who (for the completion of his misery) about this time began to perceive marks of disquiet and displeasure in the countenance and deportment of his adored Monimia: for, that young lady, in the midst of her grief, remembered her origin, and over her vexation affected to throw a veil of tranquillity which served only to give an air of disgust to her internal disturbance.

Renaldo, whose patience and philosophy were barely sufficient to bear the load of his other evils, would have been quite overwhelmed with the additional burden of Monimia's woe, if it had not assumed this appearance of disesteem, which, as he knew he had not deserved it, brought his resentment to his assistance: yet this was but a wretched cordial to support him against the baleful reflections that assailed him from every quarter; it operated like those desperate remedies, which, while they stimulate exhausted nature, help to destroy the very fundamentals of the constitution. He reviewed his own conduct with the utmost severity, and could not recollect one circumstance which could justly offend the idol of his soul. The more blameless he appeared to himself in this examination, the less excusable did her behaviour appear. He tasked his penetration to discover the cause of this alteration; he burned with impatience to know it; his discernment failed him; and he was afraid (though he knew not why) to demand an explanation. His thoughts were so circumstanced, that he durst not even unbosom himself to Fathom, though his own virtue and friendship resisted those sentiments that began to intrude upon his mind, with suggestions to the prejudice of our adventurer's fidelity.

Nevertheless, unable to endure the torments of such interesting suspense, he at length made an effort to expostulate with

with the fair orphan; and in an abrupt address, the effect of his fear and confusion, begged to know if he had inadvertently done any thing to incur her displeasure. Monimia hearing herself bluntly accosted in this unusual strain, after repeated instances of his reserve and supposed inconstancy, considered the question as a fresh insult; and summoning her whole pride to her assistance, replied with affected tranquillity, or rather with an air of scorn, that she had no title to judge, neither did she pretend to condemn his conduct. This answer, so wide of that tenderness and concern which had hitherto manifested itself in the disposition of his amiable mistress, deprived him of all power to carry on the conversation, and he retired with a low bow, fully convinced of his having irretrievably lost the place he had possessed in her affection; for, to his imagination, warped and blinded by his misfortunes, her demeanor seemed fraught, not with a transient gleam of anger, which a respectful lover would soon have appeased, but with that contempt and indifference which denote a total absence of affection and esteem. She, on the other hand, misconstrued his sudden retreat; and now they beheld the actions of each other through the false medium of prejudice and resentment. To such fatal misunderstandings, the peace and happiness of whole families often fall a sacrifice.

CHAP. XI.

OUR ADVENTURER BECOMES ABSOLUTE IN HIS POWER OVER THE PASSIONS OF HIS FRIEND; AND EFFECTS ONE HALF OF HIS AIM.

INFLUENCED by this dire mistake, the breasts of those unhappy lovers began to be invaded with the horrors of jealousy: the tender-hearted Monimia endeavoured to devour her griefs in silence; she in secret bemoaned her forlorn fate without ceasing; her tears flowed without intermission from night to morn, and from morn to night: she sought not to know the object for which she was forsaken; she meant not to upbraid her undoer; her aim was to find a sequestered corner, in which she could indulge her sorrow; where she could brood over the melancholy re-

membrance of her former felicity, where she could recollect those happy scenes she had enjoyed under the wings of her indulgent parents, when her whole life was a revolution of pleasures, and she was surrounded with affluence, pomp, and admiration; where she could, unmolested, dwell upon the wretched comparison between her past and present condition, and paint every circumstance of her misery in the most aggravating colours, that they might make the deeper impression upon her mind, and the more speedily contribute to that dissolution for which she ardently wished, as a total release from woe.

Amidst these pinings, she began to loath all sustenance; her cheeks grew wan, her bright eyes lost their splendor, the roses vanished from her lips, and her delicate limbs could hardly support their burden; in a word, her sole consolation was limited to the prospect of depositing her sorrows in the grave; and her only wish was to procure a retreat in which she might wait with resignation for that happy period. Yet this melancholy comfort she could not obtain without the advice and mediation of Fathom, whom she therefore still continued to see and consult. While these consultations were held, Renaldo's bosom was ravaged with tempests of rage and distraction. He believed himself superseded in the affection of his mistress, by some favoured rival, whose success rankled at his soul; and though he scarce durst communicate the suspicion to his own heart, his observation continually whispered to him, that he was supplanted by his friend Fathom; for Monimia was totally detached from the conversation of every other man, and he had of late noted their intercourse with distempered eyes.

These considerations sometimes transported him to such a degree of frenzy, that he was tempted to sacrifice them both, as traitors to gratitude, friendship, and love; but such deliriums soon vanished before his honour and humanity. He would not allow himself to think amiss of Ferdinand, until some undoubted mark of his guilt should appear; and this was so far from being the case, that hitherto there was scarce a presumption. 'On the contrary,' said he to himself, 'I am hourly receiving proofs of his sympathy and attachment: not but that he may be the innocent

‘innocent cause of my mishap. His superior qualifications may have attracted the eye, and engaged the heart, of that inconstant fair, without his being sensible of the victory he has won; or, perhaps, shocked at the conquest he hath unwillingly made, he discourages her advances, tries to reason down her unjustifiable passion, and in the mean time conceals from me the particulars, out of regard to my happiness and quiet.’

Under cover of these favourable conjectures, our adventurer securely prosecuted his scheme upon the unfortunate Monimia. He dedicated himself wholly to her service and conversation, except at those times when his company was requested by Renaldo, who now very seldom exacted his attendance. In his ministry about the person of the beauteous orphan, this cunning incendiary mingled such awful regard, such melting compassion, as effectually screened him from the suspicion of treachery, while he widened the fatal breach between her and her lover, by the most diabolical insinuations. He represented his friend as a voluptuary, who gratified his own appetite without the least regard to honour or conscience; and, with a shew of infinite reluctance, imparted some anecdotes of his sensuality, which he had feigned for the purpose; then he would exclaim in an affected transport, ‘Gracious Heaven! is it possible for any man who has the least title to perception or humanity, to injure such innocence and perfection! For my own part, had I been so undeservedly happy—heaven and earth! Forgive my transports, Madam; I cannot help seeing and admiring such divine attractions! I cannot help resenting your wrongs: it is the cause of virtue I espouse; it ought to be the cause of every honest man.’

He had often repeated such apostrophes as these, which she ascribed to nothing else than sheer benevolence and virtuous indignation, and actually began to think he had made some impression upon her heart; not that he now entertained the hope of an immediate triumph over her chastity. The more he contemplated her character, the more difficult the conquest seemed to be; he therefore altered his plan, and resolved to carry on his operations under the shelter of honourable proposals, foreseeing that a wife of

her qualifications, if properly managed, would turn greatly to the account of the husband; or if her virtue should prove refractory, that he could at any time rid himself of the incumbrance, by decamping without beat of drum, after he should be cloyed with possession.

Elevated by these expectations, he, one day, in the midst of a preconcerted rhapsody, importing that he could no longer conceal the fire that preyed upon his heart, threw himself on his knees before the lovely mourner, and imprinted a kiss on her fair hand. Though he did not presume to take this liberty, till after such preparation as he thought had altogether extinguished her regard for Melville, and paved the way for his own reception in room of that discarded lover; he had so far overshot his mark, that Monimia, instead of favouring his declaration, started up and retired in silence, her cheeks glowing with shame, and her eyes gleaming with indignation.

Ferdinand no sooner recovered from the confusion produced by this unexpected repulse, than he saw the necessity of coming to a speedy determination, lest the offended fair-one should appeal to Renaldo, in which case they might be mutually undeceived, to his utter shame and confusion; he therefore resolved to deprecate her anger, by humble supplications, and by protesting that whatever tortures he might suffer by suppressing his sentiments, she should never again be offended with a declaration of his passion.

Having thus appeased the gentle Monimia, and discovered that in spite of her resentment his friend still kept possession of her heart, he determined to work an effectual separation, so as that the young lady, being utterly deserted by Melville, should be left altogether in his power. With this Christian intention, he began to sadden his visage with a double shade of pensive melancholy, in the presence of Renaldo; to stifle a succession of involuntary sighs; to answer from the purpose; to be incoherent in his discourse; and, in a word, to act the part of a person wrapt up in sorrowful cogitation.

Count Melville, soon as he perceived these symptoms, very kindly enquired into the cause of them, and was not a little alarmed to hear the artful and evasive answers of Ferdinand; who, without disclosing the source of his disquiet,

earnestly begged leave to retire into some other corner of the world. Roused by this intreaty, the Hungarian's jealousy awoke, and with violent agitation he exclaimed: 'Then are my fears too true! My dear Fathom, I comprehend the meaning of your request. I have for some time perceived an host of horrors approaching from that quarter. I know your worth and honour. I depend upon your friendship; and I conjure you by all the ties of it, to free me at once from the most miserable suspense, by owning you have involuntarily captivated the heart of that unhappy maiden?'

To this solemn interrogation he made no reply; but shedding a flood of tears, (of which he had always a magazine at command) he repeated his desire of withdrawing; and took God to witness, that what he proposed was solely for the quiet of his honoured patron and beloved friend. 'Enough!' cried the unfortunate Renaldo; 'the measure of my woes is now filled up.' So saying, he fell backwards in a swoon, from which he was with difficulty recovered to the sensation of the most exquisite torments. During this paroxysm, our adventurer nursed him with infinite care and tenderness; he exhorted him to summon all his fortitude to his assistance; to remember his fore-fathers, and exert himself in the imitation of their virtues; to fly from those bewitching charms which had enslaved his better part; to retrieve his peace of mind, by reflecting on the inconstancy and ingratitude of woman, and amuse his imagination in the pursuit of honour and glory.

After these admonitions, he amused his ears with a forged detail of the gradual advances made to him by Monimia, and the steps he had taken to discourage her addresses, and re-establish her virtue; poisoning the mind of that credulous youth to such a degree, that in all probability he would have put a fatal period to his own existence, had not Fathom found means to allay the rage of his ecstasy, by the cunning arrangement of opposite considerations. He set his pride against his love; he opposed his resentment to his sorrow, and his ambition to his despair. Notwithstanding the balance of power, so settled among these antagonists, so violent were the shocks of their successive conflicts,

that his bosom fared like a wretched province, harassed, depopulated, and laid waste, by two fierce contending armies. From this moment his life was nothing but an alternation of starts and reveries; he wept and raved by turns, according to the prevailing gust of passion; food became a stranger to his lips, and sleep to his eye-lids; he could not support the presence of Monimia; her absence increased the torture of his pangs; and when he met her by accident, he started back with horror, like a traveller who chances to tread upon a snake.

The poor afflicted orphan, worn to a shadow with self-consuming anguish, eager to find some lowly retreat, where she could breathe out her soul in peace, and terrified at the frantick behaviour of Renaldo, communicated to Fathom her desire of removing, and begged that he would take a small picture of her father, decorated with diamonds, and convert them into money, for the expence of her subsistence. This was the last pledge of her family, which she had received from her mother, who had preserved it in the midst of numberless distresses; and no other species of misery but that which she groaned under could have prevailed upon the daughter to part with it. But, exclusive of other motives, the very image itself, by recalling to her mind the honours of her name, upbraided her with living in dependence upon a man who had treated her with such indignity and ingratitude; besides, she flattered herself with the hope that she should not long survive the loss of this testimonial.

Our adventurer, with many professions of sorrow and mortification at his own want of capacity to prevent such an alienation, undertook to dispose of it to the best advantage, and to provide her with a cheap and retired apartment, to which he would conduct her in safety, though at the hazard of his life. In the mean time, however, he repaired to his friend Renaldo; and after having admonished him to arm his soul with patience and philosophy, declared that Monimia's guilty passion for himself could no longer be kept within bounds: that she had conjured him, in the most pressing manner, to assist her in escaping from a house which she considered as the worst of dungeons, because she was in it daily exposed to the sight and company of a man whom she detested; and that

that she had bribed him to compliance with her request, not only with repeated promises of eternal love and submission, but also with the picture of her father set with diamonds, which she had hitherto reserved as the last and greatest testimony of her affection and esteem.

With these words, he presented the fatal pledge to the eyes of the astonished youth, upon whom it operated like the poisonous sight of the basilisk; for, in an instant, the whole passions of his soul were in the most violent agitation. 'What!' cried he, in an extasy of rage, 'is she so abandoned to perfidy, so lost to shame, so damned to constancy, to gratitude, and virtuous love, as to meditate the means of leaving me without decency, without remorse! to forsake me in my adversity, when my hapless fortune can no longer flatter the pride and vanity of her expectation! O woman! woman! woman! what simile shall I find to illustrate the character of the sex? But I will not have recourse to vain complaints and feeble exclamations. By Heaven! she shall not escape; she shall not triumph in her levity; she shall not exult in my distress: no! I will rather sacrifice her to my just resentment, to the injured powers of love and friendship. I will act the avenging minister of Heaven! I will mangle that fair bosom which contains so false a heart! I will tear her to pieces, and scatter those beauteous limbs, as a prey to the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air!'

Fathom, who expected this storm, far from attempting to oppose its progress, waited with patience until its first violence was overblown; then, assuming an air of condolence, animated with that resolution which a friend ought to maintain on such occasions, 'My dear count,' said he, 'I am not at all surprized at your emotion, because I know what a heart, susceptible as yours, must feel from the apostacy of one who has reigned so long the object of your love, admiration, and esteem. Your endeavours to drive her from your thoughts, must create an agony much more severe than that which divorces the soul from the body. Nevertheless, I am so confident of your virtue and your manhood, as to foresee that you will allow the frail Monimia to execute that resolution

which she hath so unwisely taken to withdraw herself from your love and protection. Believe me, my best friend and benefactor, this is a step, in consequence of which you will infallibly retrieve your peace of mind. It may cost you many bitter pangs, it may probe your wounds to the quick; but those pangs will be soothed by the gentle and salutary wing of time, and that probing will rouse you to a due sense of your own dignity and importance, which will enable you to convert your attention to objects far more worthy of your contemplation. All the hopes of happiness you had cherished in the possession of Monimia, are now irrecoverably blasted; her heart is now debased beneath your consideration; her love is, without all doubt, extinguished, and her honour irretrievably lost; inasmuch, that were she to profess sorrow for her indiscretion, and implore your forgiveness with the most solemn promises of regarding you for the future with unalterable fidelity and affection, you ought not to restore her to that place in your heart which she hath so meanly forfeited, because you could not at the same time re-estate her in the possession of that delicate esteem, without which there is no harmony, no rapture, no true enjoyment in love. No, my dear Renaldo, expel the unworthy tenant from your bosom; allow her to fill up the measure of her ingratitude, by deserting her lover, friend, and benefactor. Your glory demands her dismissal; the world will applaud your generosity, and your own heart approve of your conduct: so disincumbered, let us exert ourselves once more in promoting your departure from this island, that you may revisit your father's house, do justice to yourself and amiable sister, and take vengeance on the author of your wrongs; then dedicate yourself to glory, in imitation of your renowned ancestors, and flourish in the favour of your Imperial patron.'

These remonstrances had such effect upon the Hungarian, that his face was lighted up by a transient gleam of satisfaction; he embraced Ferdinand with great ardour, calling him his pride, his Mentor, his good genius; and intreated him to gratify the inclination of that fickle creature, so far as to convey her to another lodging, without loss of time,

while he would, by absenting himself, favour their retreat.

Our hero having obtained this permission, went immediately to the skirts of the town, where he had previously bespoken a small, though neat apartment, at the house of an old woman, widow of a French refugee; he had already reconnoitred the ground, by sounding his landlady, from whose poverty and complaisance he found reason to expect all sorts of freedom and opportunity for the accomplishment of his aim upon Monimia's person. The room being prepared for her reception, he returned to that disconsolate beauty, to whom he presented ten guineas, which he pretended to have raised by pledging the picture; though he himself acted as the pawnbroker on this occasion, for a very plain and obvious reason.

The fair orphan was overjoyed to find her wish so speedily accomplished: she forthwith packed up her necessaries in a trunk; and a hackney-coach was called in the dusk of the evening, in which she embarked with her baggage and conductor.

Yet she did not leave the habitation of Renaldo without regret. In the instant of parting, the idea of that unfortunate youth was associated with every well-known object that presented itself to her eyes; not as an inconstant, ungenerous, and perjured swain, but as the accomplished, the virtuous, the melting lover, who had captivated her virgin heart. As Fathom led her to the door, she was met by Renaldo's dog, which had long been her favourite, and the poor animal fawning upon her as she passed, her heart was overwhelmed with such a gush of tenderness, that a flood of tears streamed down her cheeks, and she had well-nigh sunk upon the floor.

Ferdinand considering this emotion as the last tribute she would pay to Renaldo, hurried her into the coach, where she soon recovered her composure; and in a little time he ushered her into the house of Madame La Mer, by whom she was received with great cordiality, and conducted to her apartment, with which she found no other fault but that of it's being too good for one in her forlorn situation: here, while the tear of gratitude started in either eye, she thanked our adventurer for his benevolence and kind concern, assuring him, that she would not fail daily to beseech the Most

High to shower down blessings upon him, as the orphan's friend and protector.

Fathom was not deficient in those expressions that were best adapted to her present turn of mind: he observed, that what he had done was in obedience to the dictates of common humanity, which would have prompted him to assist any fellow-creature in distress; but that her peculiar virtue and qualifications were such as challenged the utmost exertion of his faculties in her service. He said, that surely Heaven had not created such perfection in vain; that she was destined to receive as well as to communicate happiness; and that the Providence which she so piously adored, would not fail, in due season, to raise her from distress and affliction, to that honour and felicity for which she was certainly ordained: in the mean time, he intreated her to depend upon his service and fidelity; and the article of her board being settled, he left her to the company and consolation of her discreet hostess, who soon insinuated herself into the good opinion of her beauteous lodger.

While our hero was employed in this transaction, Renaldo sallied forth in a sort of intoxication, which Fathom's admonitions had inspired; and repairing to a certain noted coffee-house, engaged at chess with an old French refugee, that his attention, by being otherwise employed, might not stray towards that fatal object which he ardently wished to forget. But, unluckily for him, he had scarce performed three moves of the game, when his ears were exposed to a dialogue between two young gentlemen; one of whom asked the other if he would go and see the orphan acted at one of the theatres; observing, as a farther inducement, that the part of Monimia would be performed by a young gentlewoman who had never appeared on the stage. At mention of that name, Renaldo started; for, though it did not properly belong to his orphan, it was the appellation by which she had been distinguished ever since her separation from her father's house; and therefore it recalled her to his imagination in the most interesting point of view. Though he endeavoured to expel the image by a closer application to his play, every now and then it intruded upon his fancy, and at each return made a stronger impression; so that he found himself in the

the situation of an unfortunate bark stranded upon some hidden rock, which, when the wind begins to blow, feels every succeeding wave more boisterous than the former, until, with irresistible fury, they surmount her decks, sweep every thing before them, and dash her all to pieces.

The refugee had observed his first emotion, which he attributed to an unforeseen advantage he himself had gained over the Hungarian: but seeing him, in the sequel, bite his lip, roll his eyes, groan, writhe his body, ejaculate incoherent curses, and neglect his game, the Huguenot concluded that he was mad; and being seized with terror and dismay, got up and scampered off without ceremony or hesitation.

Melville, thus left to the horrors of his own thought, which tortured him with the apprehension of losing Monimia for ever, could no longer combat that suggestion, but ran homewards with all the speed he could exert, in order to prevent her retreat. When he crossed the threshold, he was struck with such a damp of presaging fear, that he durst not in person approach her apartment, nor even, by questioning the servant, inform himself of the particulars he wanted to know: yet his suspense becoming more insupportable than his fear, he rushed from room to room in quest of that which was not to be found; and seeing Monimia's chamber-door open, entered the deserted temple in a state of distraction, calling aloud upon her name. All was silent, solitary, and woeful. 'She is gone!' he cried, shedding a flood of tears; 'she is for ever lost; and all my hopes of happiness are fled!'

So saying, he sunk upon that couch on which Monimia had oft reposed, and abandoned himself to all the excess of grief and despondence. In this deplorable condition he was found by our adventurer, who gently chid him for his want of resolution, and again repelled his sorrow, by arousing his resentment against the innocent cause of his disquiet, having beforehand forged the particulars of provocation. 'Is it possible,' said he, 'that Renaldo can still retain the least sentiment of regard for a fickle woman, by whom he has been so ungratefully forsaken and so unjustly scorned? Is it possible he can be so disturbed by the loss of a creature who is herself lost to all virtue and deco-

rum? Time and reflection, my worthy friend, will cure you of that inglorious malady: and the future misconduct of that imprudent damsel will, doubtless, contribute to the recovery of your peace. Her behaviour at leaving the house where she had received so many marks of the most delicate affection, was in all respects so opposite to honour and decency, that I could scarce refrain from telling her I was shocked at her deportment, even while she loaded me with protestations of love. When a woman's heart is once depraved, she bids adieu to all restraint; she preserves no measures. It was not simply contempt which she expressed for Renaldo; she seems to resent his being able to live under her disdain; and that resentment stoops to objects unworthy of indignation. Even your dog was not exempted from the effects of her displeasure: for, in her passage to the door, she kicked the poor animal as one of your dependants; and in our way to the apartment I had provided for her, she entertained me with a ludicrous comment upon the manner in which you first made her acquainted with your passion. All that modesty of carriage, all that chastity of conversation, all that dignity of grief, which she knew so well how to affect, is now entirely laid aside, and when I quitted her, she seemed the most gay, giddy, and impertinent of her sex.'

'Gracious powers!' exclaimed Renaldo, starting from the couch 'am I under the delusion of a dream; or are these things really so, as my friend has represented them? Such a total and sudden degeneracy is amazing! is monstrous and unnatural!'—'Such, my dear count,' replied our hero, 'is the caprice of a female heart, fickle as the wind, uncertain as a calm at sea, fixed to no principle, but swayed by every fantastick gust of passion, or of whim. Congratulate yourself, therefore, my friend, upon your happy deliverance from such a domestick plague; upon the voluntary exile of a traitor from your bosom: recollect the dictates of your duty, your discretion, and your glory, and think upon the honours and elevated enjoyment for which you are certainly ordained. To-night, let us over a cheerful

‘cheerful bottle anticipate your success; and to-morrow I will accompany you to the house of an usurer, who, I am informed, fears no risk, provided twenty per cent. be given, and the borrower’s life insured.’

CHAP. XII.

THE ART OF BORROWING FARTHER EXPLAINED, AND AN ACCOUNT OF A STRANGE PHENOMENON.

IN this manner did the artful incendiary work upon the passions of the credulous unsuspecting Hungarian, who pressed him to his breast with the most cordial expressions of friendship, calling him his guardian, his saviour, his second father, and gave himself up wholly to his advice.

Next morning, according to the plan they had laid over night, they repaired to a tavern in the neighbourhood of the person to whom our adventurer had been directed, and were fortunate enough to find him in the house, transacting a money affair with a young gentleman who treated him with his morning’s whet.

That affair being negotiated, he adjourned into another room with Renaldo and his companion, who were not a little surprized to see this minister of Plutus in the shape of a young sprightly beau, trimmed up in all the foppery of the fashion; for they had hitherto always associated with the idea of an usurer, old age, and rusty apparel. After divers modish congees, he begged to know to what he should attribute the honour of their message; when Ferdinand, who acted the orator, told him, that his friend Count Melville, having occasion for a sum of money, had been directed to a gentleman of his name, ‘And I suppose,’ added he, ‘you are the son of the person with whom the affair is to be negotiated.’

‘Sir,’ said this *petit maitre*, with a smile, ‘I perceive you are surprized to see one of my profession in the appearance of a gentleman; and perhaps your wonder will not cease, when I tell you, that my education was liberal, and that I once had the honour to bear a commission in the British army. I was, indeed, a first lieutenant of marines, and will ven-

ture to say, that no officer in the service was more delicate than myself, in observing all the punctilios of honour. I entertained the utmost contempt for all the trading part of the nation, and suffered myself to be run through the body in a duel, rather than roll with a brother lieutenant, who was a broker’s son: but, thank Heaven! I have long ago conquered all those ridiculous prejudices. I soon observed, that without money there was no respect, honour, or convenience to be acquired in life; that wealth amply supplied the want of wit, merit, and pedigree, having influence and pleasure ever at command; and that the world never failed to worship the flood of affluence, without examining the dirty channels through which it commonly flowed.

At the end of the war, finding my appointments reduced to two shillings and four-pence per day, and being addicted to pleasures which I could not possibly purchase from such a fund, I sold my half-pay for two hundred pounds, which I lent upon bond to a young officer of the same regiment, on condition that he should insure his life, and restore one-fourth part of the sum by way of premium. I happened to be lucky in this first essay; for the borrower, having in six weeks expended the money, made an excursion on the highway, was apprehended, tried, convicted of felony, and cut his own throat, to prevent the shame of a publick execution; so that his bond was discharged by the insurers.

In short, gentlemen, when I engaged in this business, I determined to carry it on with such spirit, as would either make my fortune, or entirely ruin me in a little time; and hitherto my endeavours have been tolerably successful: nor do I think my proceedings a whit more criminal or unjust, than those of other merchants, who strive to turn their money to the best account. The commodity I deal in is cash; and it is my business to sell it to the best advantage. A London factor sends a cargo of goods to market, and if he gets two hundred per cent. upon the sale, he is commended for his industry and address. If I sell money for one-fourth part of that profit, certain persons will be so unjust, as to cry shame upon

upon me, for taking such advantage
 of my neighbour's distress; not con-
 sidering, that the trader took four times
 the same advantage of those people who
 bought his cargo, though his risk was
 not half so great as mine; and al-
 though the money I sold, perhaps re-
 trieved the borrower from the very
 jaws of destruction. For example, it
 was but yesterday I saved a worthy
 man from being arrested for a sum of
 money, for which he had bailed a friend
 who treacherously left him in the
 lurch; as he did not foresee what
 would happen, he had made no pro-
 vision for the demand, and his sphere
 of life secluding him from all sorts
 of monied intercourse, he could not
 raise the cash by his credit in the usual
 way of borrowing; so that, without
 my assistance, he must have gone to
 gaol; a disgrace which would have
 proved fatal to the peace of his fa-
 mily, and utterly ruined his reputa-
 tion. Nay, that very young gentle-
 man from whom I just now parted,
 will in all probability be indebted
 to me for a very genteel livelihood.
 He had obtained the absolute pro-
 mise of being provided for, by a
 great man, who sits at the helm of af-
 fairs in a neighbouring kingdom; but
 being destitute of all other resources,
 he could not have equipped himself
 for the voyage, in order to profit by
 his lordship's intension, unless I had
 enabled him to pursue his good for-
 tune.

Renaldo was not a little pleased to
 hear this harangue, to which Fathom
 replied with many florid encomiums
 upon the usurer's good sense and hu-
 mane disposition: then he explained the
 errand of his friend, which was to bor-
 row three hundred pounds, in order to
 retrieve his inheritance, of which he had
 been defrauded in his absence.

'Sir,' said the lender, addressing
 himself to Count Melville, 'I pretend
 to have acquired by experience some
 skill in physiognomy; and though
 there are some faces so deeply disgui-
 sed as to baffle all the penetration of
 our art, there are others in which the
 heart appears with such nakedness of
 integrity as at once to recommend it
 to our good will. I own, your coun-
 tenance prepossesses me in your fa-
 vour; and you shall be accommo-

dated upon those terms from which I
 never deviate, provided you can find
 proper security that you shall not
 quit the British dominions; for that,
 with me, is a condition *sine qua non*.'

This was a very disagreeable decla-
 ration to Renaldo, who candidly owned,
 that as his concerns lay upon the con-
 tinent, his purpose was to leave Eng-
 land without delay. The usurer pro-
 fessed himself sorry that it was not in
 his power to oblige him; and, in order
 to prevent any farther importunity, as-
 sured them, he had laid it down as a
 maxim, from which he would never
 swerve, to avoid all dealings with peo-
 ple whom (if need should be) he could
 not sue by the laws of this realm.

Thus the intervention of one un-
 lucky and unforeseen circumstance blast-
 ed, in an instant, the budding hopes of
 Melville; who, while his visage exhib-
 ited the most sorrowful disappoint-
 ment, begged to know, if there was
 any person of his acquaintance who
 might be less scrupulous in that parti-
 cular.

The young gentleman directed them
 to another member of his profession;
 and, wishing them success, took his leave
 with great form and complaisance. This
 instance of politeness was, however, no
 more than a shift to disengage himself
 the more easily from their intreaties;
 for, when the case was opened to the
 second usurer, he blessed himself from
 such customers, and dismissed them with
 the most mortifying and boorish refusal.
 Notwithstanding these repulses, Renaldo
 resolved to make one desperate push;
 and, without allowing himself the least
 respite, solicited, one by one, not fewer
 than fifteen persons who dealt in this
 kind of traffick, and his proposals were
 rejected by each. At last, fatigued by
 the toil, and exasperated at the ill suc-
 cess of his expedition; and half mad
 with the recollection of his finances,
 which were now drained to half a
 crown, 'Since we have nothing to ex-
 pect,' cried he, 'from the favour of
 Christians, let us have recourse to
 the descendants of Judah. Though
 they lie under the general reproach of
 nations, as a people dead to virtue
 and benevolence, and wholly devoted
 to avarice, fraud, and extortion, the
 most savage of their tribe cannot treat
 me with more barbarity of indiffe-
 rence;

‘rence, than I have experienced among those who are the authors of their reproach.’

Although Fathom looked upon this proposal as an extravagant symptom of despair, he affected to approve of the scheme, and encouraged Renaldo with the hope of succeeding in another quarter even if this expedition should fail: for, by this time, our adventurer was half resolved to export him at his own charge, rather than he should be much longer restricted in his designs upon Monimia.

Meanwhile, being resolved to try the experiment upon the children of Israel, they betook themselves to the house of a rich Jew, whose wealth they considered as a proof of his rapaciousness; and, being admitted into his counting-house, they found him in the midst of half a dozen clerks, when Renaldo, in his imagination, likened him unto a minister of darkness surrounded by his familiars, and planning schemes of misery to be executed upon the hapless sons of men. In spite of these suggestions, which were not at all mitigated by the forbidding aspect of the Hebrew, he demanded a private audience; and, being ushered into another apartment, he explained his business with manifest marks of disorder and affliction. Indeed, his confusion was in some measure owing to the looks of the Jew; who, in the midst of his exordium, pulled down his eye-brows, which were surprizingly black and bushy, so as, in appearance, totally to extinguish his visage, though he was all the time observing our youth from behind those almost impenetrable thickets.

Melville having signified his request, ‘Young gentleman,’ said the Israelite, with a most discordant voice, ‘what in the name of goodness could induce you to come to me upon such an errand? Did you ever hear that I lent money to strangers without security?’ — ‘No,’ replied Renaldo; ‘nor did I believe I should profit by my application: but my affairs are desperate; and my proposals having been rejected by every Christian to whom they were offered, I was resolved to try my fate among the Jews, who are reckoned another species of men.’

Fathom, alarmed at this abrupt reply, which he supposed could not fail to disgust the merchant, interposed in

the conversation, by making an apology for the plain dealing of his friend, who, he said, was soured and ruffled by his misfortunes: then, exerting that power of eloquence which he had at command, he expostulated upon Renaldo’s claim and expectations; described the wrongs he had suffered, extolled his virtue, and drew a most pathetic picture of his distress.

The Jew listened attentively for some time; then his eye-brows began to rise and fall alternately: he coughed, sneezed, and winking hard, ‘I am plagued,’ said he, ‘with a salt rheum that trickles from my eyes without intermission.’ So saying, he wiped the moisture from his face, and proceeded in these words. ‘Sir, your story is plausible, and your friend is a good advocate; but, before I give an answer to your demand, I must beg leave to ask if you can produce undeniable evidence of your being the identical person you really assume. If you are really the Count De Melville, you will excuse my caution; we cannot be too much on our guard against fraud, though I must own you have not the air of an impostor.’

Renaldo’s eyes began to sparkle at this preliminary question; to which he replied, that he could procure the testimony of the emperor’s minister, to whom he had occasionally paid his respects since his first arrival in England.

‘If that be the case,’ said the Jew, ‘take the trouble to call here to-morrow morning at eight o’clock, and I will carry you in my own coach to the house of his excellency, with whom I have the honour to be acquainted; and, if he has nothing to object against your character or pretensions, I will contribute my assistance towards your obtaining justice at the Imperial court.’

The Hungarian was so much confounded at this unexpected reception, that he had not power to thank the merchant for his promised favour, but stood motionless and silent, while the streams of gratitude ran down his cheeks. This genuine emotion of the heart was of more weight with the Jew than the eloquent acknowledgment which Ferdinand took the opportunity of making for his friend; and he was fain to dismiss them a little abruptly, in order to prevent a second discharge of that

that same rheum of which he had already complained.

Melville recollected all that had happened as a dream, which had no foundation in truth, and was all day long in a sort of delirium, produced by the alternate gusts of hope and fear that still agitated his bosom; for he was not yet without apprehension of being again disappointed by some unlucky occurrence.

He did not, however, fail to be punctual to the hour of his appointment, when the Jew told him, there would be no occasion for visiting the ambassador, because Renaldo had been the preceding day recognized by one of the clerks, who had been employed as a purveyor in the Imperial army; and who, knowing his family, confirmed every thing he had alledged. 'After breakfast,' continued this benevolent Israelite, 'I will give you an order upon my banker for five hundred pounds, that you may be enabled to appear at Vienna, as the son and representative of Count Melville; and you shall also be furnished with a letter of recommendation to a person of some influence at that court, whose friendship and countenance may be of some service to your suit: for I am now heartily engaged in your interest, in consequence of the fair and unblemished character which I find you have hitherto maintained.'

The reader must appeal to his own heart, to acquire a just idea of Renaldo's feelings when every tittle of these promises was fulfilled, and the merchant refused to take one farthing by way of premium, contenting himself with the slender security of a personal bond. He was, in truth, overwhelmed with the obligation, and certainly disposed to believe, that his benefactor was something more than human. As for Fathom, his sentiments took a different turn; and he scrupled not to impute all this kindness to some deep-laid interested scheme, the scope of which he could not at present comprehend.

After the tumults of the young gentleman's joy had subsided, and he found himself eased of that burdensome poverty, under which he had groaned so long, his thoughts, which before were dissipated upon the various circumstan-

ces of distress, began to collect themselves in a body, and to resume their deliberations upon a subject which they had been long accustomed to consider; this was no other than the forlorn Monimia, whose idea now emerged in his bosom, being disencumbered of one part of the load by which it had been depressed. He mentioned her name to Fathom, with marks of the most melting compassion, deplored her apostasy, and, while he protested that he had divorced her for ever from his heart, expressed an inclination to see her once more before his departure, that he might in person exhort her to penitence and reformation.

Our adventurer, who dreaded such an interview as the infallible means of his own ruin, resisted the proposal with the whole power of his elocution. He affirmed, that Renaldo's desire was a manifest proof that he still retained part of the fatal poison which that enchantress had spread within his veins, and that the sight of her, softened by his reproaches into tears and affected contrition, would dispel his resentment, disable his manhood, and blow the embers of his former passion to such a rage, as would hurry him on to a reconciliation, which would debase his honour and ruin his future peace. In a word, Ferdinand described the danger that would attend the meeting in such emphatic terms, that the Hungarian started with horror at the picture which he drew, and in this particular conformed with the admonition of his friend.

One hundred pounds of the Jew's money was immediately appropriated for the payment of his most urgent debts; the like sum he presented to his friend Fathom, with a solemn promise of sharing with him whatever good fortune might await him in Germany: and though Monimia had forfeited all title to his regard, so ill could he bear the prospect of her distress, that he entrusted his dear companion with the half of what remained, to be expended for her use, fully resolving to screen her from the shocks and temptations of want, as the circumstances of his future fate would allow.

Fathom, far from opposing, applauded his generosity with marks of extreme wonder and admiration, assuring him, that she should be put in possession

possession of his bounty immediately after his departure, he being unwilling to make her acquainted with her good fortune before that period, lest, finding his affairs in a fair way of being retrieved, she should be base enough to worship his returning prosperity, and, by false professions, and artful blandishments, seek to ensnare his heart anew.

C H A P. XIII.

COUNT FATHOM UNMASKS HIS BATTERY; IS REPULSED, AND VARIES HIS OPERATIONS WITHOUT EFFECT.

EVERY necessary preparation being made, Renaldo, accompanied by our adventurer, took the road to Dover, where he embarked in a packet-boat for Calais, after having settled a correspondence with his dear Ferdinand, from whom he did not part without tears. He had before solicited him to be his fellow-traveller, that he might personally enjoy the benefit of his conversation, and superior sagacity; but these intreaties he strenuously opposed, on pretence of his being determined to push his fortune in England, which he considered as his native country, and as the land in which (of all others) a man of merit has the best encouragement. Such were the reasons he alleged, for refusing to attend his benefactor, who was himself eagerly desirous of attaining a settlement in the island of Great Britain: but our hero's real motives for staying were of a very different complexion. The reader is already informed of his aim upon the fair orphan, which at present was the chief spring of his conduct; he may also recollect such passages of his life as were sufficient to deter him from re-appearing at Presburg or Vienna: but, besides these reflections, he was detained by a full persuasion that Renaldo would sink under the power and influence of his antagonist, consequently be rendered incapable to provide for his friends; and that he himself, fraught with wiles and experience as he was, could not fail to make himself amends for what he had suffered among a people equally rich and unthinking.

Melville having embraced our ad-

venturer, and with a deep sigh bid him take care of the unfortunate Monimia, committed himself to the sea; and, by the assistance of a favourable gale, was in four hours, safely landed on the French shore; while Fathom took post-horses for London, where he arrived that same night, and next day, in the forenoon, went to visit the beauteous mourner, who had as yet received no intimation of Renaldo's departure or design. He found her in the attitude of writing a letter to her inconstant lover, the contents of which the reader will be acquainted with in due time. Her countenance, notwithstanding the veil of melancholy by which it was overcast, seemed altogether serene and composed; she was the picture of pious resignation, and sat like PATIENCE on a monument, smiling at grief. After having paid the compliment of the morning, Fathom begged pardon for having omitted to visit her during three days, in which, he said, his time had been wholly engrossed in procuring a proper equipage for Count Melville, who had at last bid an eternal adieu to the island of Great Britain.

At this information the hapless Monimia fell back in her chair, and continued some minutes in a swoon; from which being recovered, 'Excuse me, Mr. Fathom,' cried she, with a deep sigh; 'this, I hope, is the last agony I shall feel from my unhappy passion.' Then, wiping the tears from her lovely eyes, she retrieved her tranquillity, and desired to know by what means Renaldo had been enabled to undertake his journey into the empire. Our hero, upon this occasion, assumed the whole merit of having promoted the interest of his friend, by giving her to understand, that he, in consequence of an unforeseen windfall, had defrayed the expence of the count's equipment; though he observed that it was not without reluctance he saw Renaldo make a wrong use of his friendship.

'Although I was happy,' proceeded this artful traitor, 'in being able to discharge my obligations to the house of Melville, I could not help feeling the most sensible chagrin, when I saw my assistance rendered subservient to the triumphs of the youth's baseness and infidelity; for he chose, as the companion of his travels, the abandoned woman for whom he had forsaken

‘forsook the all-perfect Monimia, whose virtue and accomplishments did not preserve her sacred from his ungrateful sarcasms and unmannerly ridicule. Believe me, Madam, I was so shocked at his conversation on that subject, and so much incensed at his want of delicacy, that my temper was scarce sufficient for the ceremony of parting; and now that my debt to his family is overpaid, I have solemnly renounced his correspondence.’

When she heard that, instead of betraying the least symptom of regret or compassion for her unhappy fate, the perfidious youth had exulted over her fall, and even made her a subject for his mirth, the blood revisited her faded cheeks, and resentment restored to her eyes that poignancy which sorrow had before overcome. Yet she scorned to give speech to her indignation; but, forcing a smile, ‘Why should I repine,’ said she, ‘at the mortifications of a life which I despise, and from which, I hope, Heaven will speedily set me free!’

Fathom, fired by her emotion, which had recalled all the graces of her beauty, exclaimed in a rapture, ‘Talk not so contemptuously of this life, which hath still a fund of happiness in store for the amiable, the divine Monimia. Though one admirer hath proved an apostate to his vows, your candour will not suffer you to condemn the whole sex. Some there are, whose bosoms glow with passion equally pure, unalterable, and intense. For my own part, I have sacrificed to a rigid punctilio of honour the dearest ideas of my heart. I beheld your unrivalled charms, and deeply felt their power: yet, while a possibility of Melville’s reformation remained, and while I was restrained by my niggard fortune from making a tender worthy of your acceptance, I combated with my inclinations, and bore without repining the pangs of hopeless love. But now that my honour is disengaged, and my fortune rendered independent by the last will of a worthy nobleman, whose friendship I was favoured with in France, I presume to lay myself at the feet of the adorable Monimia, as the most faithful of admirers, whose happiness or misery wholly depends upon her nod. Believe me, Madam,

‘these are not the professions of idle gallantry: I speak the genuine, though imperfect, language of my heart: words even the most pathetic cannot do justice to my love. I gaze upon your beauty with rapture; but I contemplate the graces of your soul with such awful veneration, that I tremble while I approach you, as if my vows were addressed to some superior being.’

During this declaration, which was pronounced in the most emphatic manner, Monimia was successively agitated with shame, anger, and grief; nevertheless, she summoned her whole philosophy to her aid, and with a tranquil, though determined air, begged he would not diminish the obligations he had already conferred, by disturbing with such unseasonable addresses a poor unhappy maid, who had detached all her thoughts from earthly objects, and waited impatiently for that dissolution which alone could put a period to her misfortunes.

Fathom, imagining that these were no other than the suggestions of a temporary disappointment and despondence, which it was his business to oppose with all his eloquence and art, renewed his theme with redoubled ardour; and at last became so importunate in his desires, that Monimia, provoked beyond the power of concealing her resentment, said, she was heartily sorry to find herself under the necessity of telling him, that in the midst of her misfortunes she could not help remembering what she had been. Then rising from her seat with all the dignity of displeasure, ‘Perhaps,’ added she, ‘you have forgot who was the father of the once happy Monimia!’

With these words she retired into another chamber, leaving our adventurer confounded by the repulse he had sustained. Not that he was discouraged from prosecuting his aim: on the contrary, this rebuff seemed to add fresh vigour to his operations. He now thought it high time to bring over Madam La Mer to his interest; and, to facilitate her conversion, took an opportunity of bribing her with some considerable presents, after having amused her with a plausible tale of his passion for Monimia, with whom she undertook the office of his mediatrix, on the supposition that his intentions were honourable, and highly advantageous to her lodger.

She was, first of all, invested with

the office of obtaining pardon for the offence he had given; and in this negotiation she succeeded so well, as to become an advocate for his suit; accordingly, she took all occasions of magnifying his praise. His agreeable person was often the subject of her discourse to the fair mourner: her admiration dwelt upon his politeness, good sense, and winning deportment: and she every day retailed little stories of his benevolence and greatness of soul. The defect in his birth she represented as a circumstance altogether foreign from the consideration of his merit; especially in a nation where such distinctions are as little respected as they will be in a future state. She mentioned several persons of note, who basked in the sunshine of power and fortune, without having enjoyed the least hereditary assistance from their fore-fathers. One, she said, sprung from the loins of an obscure attorney, another was the grandson of a valet de chambre, a third was the issue of an accomptant, and a fourth the offspring of a woollen-draper: all these were the children of their own good works, and had raised themselves upon their personal virtues and address; a foundation certainly more solid and honourable than a vague inheritance derived from ancestors, in whose deserts they could not be supposed to have bore the least share.

Monimia listened to all these arguments with great patience and affability, though she at once dived into the source from which all such insinuations flowed: she joined in the commendations of Fathom, and owned herself a particular instance of that benevolence which the old lady had so justly extolled; but, once for all, to prevent the supplication which Madam La Mer was about to make, she solemnly protested, that her heart was altogether shut against any other earthly engagement; and that her thoughts were altogether employed upon her eternal salvation.

The assiduous landlady perceiving the steadiness of her disposition, thought proper to alter her method of proceeding, and for the present suspended that theme by which she found her fair lodger disoblige. Resolved to reconcile Monimia to life before she would again recommend Ferdinand to her love, she endeavoured to amuse her imagination, by recounting the occasional incidents of

the day; hoping gradually to decoy her attention to those sublunary objects from which it had been industriously weaned: she seasoned her conversation with agreeable fallies; enlarged upon the different scenes of pleasure and diversion appertaining to this great metropolis; practised upon her palate with the delicacies of eating; endeavoured to shake her temperance with repeated proffers and recommendations of certain cordials and restoratives, which she alledged were necessary for the recovery of her health; and pressed her to make little excursions into the fields that skirt the town, for the benefit of air and exercise.

While this auxiliary plied the disconsolate Monimia on one hand, Fathom was not remiss on the other: he now seemed to have sacrificed his passion to her quiet; his discourse turned upon more indifferent subjects; he endeavoured to dispel her melancholy with arguments drawn from philosophy and religion: on some occasions he displayed all his fund of good-humour, with a view to beguile her sorrow; he importuned her to give him the pleasure of squiring her to some place of innocent entertainment; and, finally, insisted upon her accepting a pecuniary reinforcement to her finances, which he knew to be in a most consumptive condition.

C H A P. XIV.

MONIMIA'S HONOUR IS PROTECTED
BY THE INTERPOSITION OF HEAVEN.

WITH that complacency and fortitude which were peculiar to herself, this hapless stranger resisted all those artful temptations. Her sustenance was barely such as exempted her from the guilt of being accessary to her own death; her drink was the simple element: she encouraged no discourse but that which turned upon the concerns of her immortal part; she never went abroad, except in visits to a French chapel in the neighbourhood; she refused the proffered assistance of our adventurer with equal obstinacy and politeness, and with pleasure saw herself wasting towards that period of mortality which was the consummation of her wish. Yet her charms, far from melting away with her constitution, seemed

to triumph over the decays of nature: her shape and features still retained that harmony for which they had always been distinguished: a mixture of majesty and sweetness diffused itself in her looks, and her feebleness added to that soft and feminine grace which attracts the sympathy, and engages the protection of every humane beholder. The associates, thus baffled in their attempts to excite her ideas of pleasure, again shifted their plan, and resolved to attack this forlorn beauty on the side of fear and mortification.

Our adventurer became less frequent in his visits, and more indifferent in his language and deportment; while Madam La Mer gradually relaxed in that complacency and respect with which she had hitherto behaved towards her fair lodger. She even began to drop hints of disapprobation and reproach against this pattern of innocence and beauty; and at length grew bold enough to tell her, that her misfortunes could be attributed to nothing but her own obstinacy and pride; that she had been at great pains to disoblige the only person who was able and willing to raise her above dependance, and that if his protection should be withdrawn, she must be exposed to the utmost extremity of distress.

These insinuations, instead of producing the desired effect, inflamed the indignation of Monimia, who, in a most dignified stile of rebuke, chid her for her indelicacy and presumption, observing, that she could have no title to take such freedoms with lodgers, whose punctuality and regular deportment left her no room to complain. Notwithstanding this animated reply, she underwent the most deplorable anguish when she reflected upon the insolence of this woman, from whose barbarity she had no resource; and seeing no other possibility of redress, than that of appealing to the good offices of Fathom, she conquered her reluctance so far, as to complain to him of Madam La Mer's incivility.

Pleased with this application, he gave her to understand, with very little ceremony or preamble, that it wholly depended upon herself, whether she should continue to be wretched, or be delivered at once from all her cares and perplexity; that, notwithstanding the disdain with which she had treated his

addresses, he was still ready to lay himself and his fortune at her feet; and that if she should again reject the disinterested proposal, the whole world, and her own conscience, would charge upon herself whatever calamities she might be subjected to in the sequel. Interpreting into a favourable hesitation her silence, which was the result of wrath and amazement, he proceeded to throw himself at her feet, and utter a romantic rhapsody; in the course of which, laying aside all that restraint which he had hitherto preserved, he seized her delicate hand, and pressed it to his lips; nay, so far did he forget himself on this occasion, that he caught the fair creature in his arms, and rudely ravished a kiss from those lips which he had before contemplated with the most distant reverence of desire.

Having thus broken down the fences of decorum, and being heated with transport, he, in all probability, would have acted the part of young Tarquin, and violated, by force, that sacred shrine of honour, beauty, and unblemished truth, had not the wrath kindled by such an unexpected outrage, inspired her with strength and spirits sufficient to protect her virtue, and intimidate the ruffian who could offer violence to such perfection. She broke from his detested embrace with surprizing agility, and called aloud to her landlady for assistance; but that discreet matron was resolved to hear nothing, and Fathom's appetite being whetted to a most brutal degree of eagerness, 'Madam,' said he, 'all opposition is vain; what you have refused to my intreaties, you shall yield to my power; and I am determined to force you to your own advantage.'

So saying, he sprung towards her, with the most savage and impious intent; when this amiable heroine snatching up his sword, which lay upon a by-table, and unsheathing it instantaneously, presented the point to his breast, and while her eyes glanced with intolerable keenness, 'Villain!' cried she, 'the spirit of my father animates my bosom, and the vengeance of Heaven shall not be frustrated.' He was not so much affected by his bodily danger, as awe-struck at the manner of her address, and the appearance of her aspect, which seemed to shine with something supernatural, and actually dis-

ordered his whole faculties, inasmuch that he retreated without attempting to make the least reply; and she having secured the door after his departure, sat down to ponder upon this shocking event.

Words are wanting to describe the accumulated horrors that took possession of her mind, when she thus beheld all her presaging fears realized, and found herself at the mercy of two wretches, who had now pulled off the mask, after having lost all sentiments of humanity. Common affliction was an agreeable reverie to what she suffered; deprived of her parents, exiled from her friends and country, reduced to the brink of wanting the most indispensable necessities of life, in a foreign land, where she knew not one person to whose protection she could have recourse from the inexpressible woes that environed her: she complained to Heaven that her life was protracted for the augmentation of that misery which was already too severe to be endured; for she shuddered at the prospect of being utterly abandoned in the last stage of mortality, without one friend to close her eyes, or do the last offices of humanity to her breathless corpse. These were dreadful reflections to a young lady who had been born to affluence and splendor, trained up in all the elegance of education, by nature fraught with that sensibility which refines the sentiment and taste, and so tenderly cherished by her indulgent parents, that *they suffered not the winds of heaven to visit her face too roughly.*

Having passed the night in such agony, she rose at day-break, and hearing the chapel-bell toll for morning prayers, resolved to go to this place of worship, in order to implore the assistance of Heaven: she no sooner opened the chamber-door with this intent, than she was met by Madam La Mer, who after having professed her concern for what had happened over-night, and imputed Mr. Fathom's rudeness to the spirit of intoxication, by which she had never before seen him possessed, she endeavoured to dissuade Monimia from her purpose, by observing, that her health would be prejudiced by the cold morning air; but finding her determined, she insisted upon accompanying her to chapel, on pretence of respect, though, in reality, with a view to prevent the escape of her beautiful lodger. Thus

attended, the hapless mourner entered the place, and according to the laudable hospitality of England, which is the only country in Christendom where a stranger is not made welcome to the house of God, this amiable creature, emaciated and enfeebled as she was, must have stood in a common passage, during the whole service, had not she been perceived by a humane gentleman, who, struck with her beauty and dignified air, and melted with sympathy at the ineffable sorrow which was visible in her countenance, opened the pew in which she sat, and accommodated Monimia and her attendant: if she was captivated by her first appearance, she was not less affected by the deportment of her fair guest, which was the pattern of genuine devotion.

In a word, this good lady, who was a merchant's widow in opulent circumstances, was inflamed with a longing desire to know and befriend the amiable stranger; who, after service, turning about to thank her for her civility, Madam Clement, with that frankness which is the result of true benevolence, told her, she was too much prepossessed in her favour, to let slip this opportunity of craving her acquaintance, and of expressing her inclination to alleviate (if possible) that affliction which was manifest in her looks.

Monimia, overwhelmed with gratitude and surprize at this unexpected address, gazed upon the lady in silence, and when she repeated her tenders of service, could make no other reply to her goodness, than by bursting into a flood of tears: this was a species of eloquence, which did not pass unregarded by Madam Clement, who, while her own eyes were bedewed with the drops of sympathy and compassion, took the lovely orphan by the hand, and led her, without farther ceremony, to her own coach, that stood waiting at the door, whither they were followed by Mrs. La Mer, who was so much confounded at the adventure, that she made no objections to the proposal of the lady who handed her lodger into the carriage; but retired, with all possible dispatch, to make Fathom acquainted with this unforeseen event.

Meanwhile, the agitation of Monimia, at this providential deliverance, was such as had well-nigh destroyed her tender frame: the blood flushed and

and forsook her cheeks by turns; she trembled from head to foot, notwithstanding the consolatory assurances of Madam Clement; and, without being able to utter one word, was conducted to the house of that kind benefactress, where the violence of her transports overpowered her constitution, and she sunk down upon a couch in a swoon, from which she was not easily recovered. This affecting circumstance augmented the pity, and interested the curiosity of Madam Clement, who concluded there was something very extraordinary in the case of the stranger, to produce these agonies; and grew impatient to hear the particulars of her story.

Monimia no sooner retrieved the use of her faculties, than looking around, and observing with what humane concern her new hostess was employed in effecting her recovery, 'Is this,' said she, 'a flattering illusion of the brain? or am I really under the protection of some beneficent being, whom Heaven hath inspired with generosity, to rescue an hapless stranger from the most forlorn state of misery and woe?' Her voice was, at all times, ravishingly sweet; and this exclamation was pronounced with such pathetick fervour, that Madam Clement clasped her in her arms, and kissing her with all the eagerness of maternal affection, 'Yes,' cried she, 'fair creature, Heaven hath bestowed upon me a heart to compassionate, and power, I hope, to lighten the burden of your sorrows.'

She then prevailed upon her to take some nourishment, and afterwards to recount the particulars of her fate; a task she performed with such accuracy and candour, that Madam Clement, far from suspecting her sincerity, saw truth and conviction in every circumstance of her tale; and having condoled her misfortunes, entreated her to forget them, or, at least, look upon herself as one sheltered under the care and tuition of a person, whose study it would be to supply her want of natural parents. This would have been a happy vicissitude of fortune, had it not arrived too late; but such a sudden and unlooked-for transition, not only disordered the faculties of poor Monimia's mind, but also overpowered the organs of her body, already fatigued and enfeebled by the distresses she had undergone; so that she was taken ill of a fever that same

night, and became delirious before morning, when a physician was called to her assistance.

While this gentleman was in the house, Madam Clement was visited by Fathom; who, after having complained in the most insinuating manner, that she had encouraged his wife to abandon her duty, told her a plausible story of his first acquaintance with Monimia, and his marriage at the Fleet, which, he said, he was ready to prove, by the evidence of the clergyman who joined them, and that of Mrs. La Mer, who was present at the ceremony. The good lady, although a little staggered at the genteel appearance, and engaging address of this stranger, could not prevail upon herself to believe that she had been imposed upon by her fair lodger, who by this time had given too convincing a proof of her sincerity: nevertheless, in order to prevent any dispute that might be prejudicial to the health or recovery of Monimia, she gave him to understand, that she would not at present enter upon the merits of the cause, but only assure him, that the young lady was actually bereft of her senses, and in imminent danger of her life; for the truth of which assertions she would appeal to his own observation, and the opinion of the physician, who was then employed in writing a prescription for the cure of her disease.

So saying, she conducted him into the chamber, where he beheld the hapless virgin stretched upon a sick bed, panting under the violence of a distemper too mighty for her weakly frame, her hair dishevelled, and discomposure in her looks; all the roses of her youth were faded, yet all the graces of her beauty were not fled; she retained that sweetness and symmetry, which death itself could not destroy; and, though her discourse was incoherent, her voice was still musical, resembling those feathered songsters who *warble their native wood-notes wild*.

Fathom, as upon all other occasions, so on this, behaved like an inimitable actor: he ran to the bed-side, with all the trepidation of a distracted lover; he fell upon his knees, and while the tears rolled down his cheeks, imprinted a thousand kisses on the soft hand of Monimia; who, regarding him with a lack lustre, and undistinguishing eye, 'Alas, Renaldo!' said she, 'we were
' born

'born to be unhappy.'—'Would to 'Heaven,' cried Ferdinand, in a transport of grief, 'the wretch Renaldo 'had never been born! that is the villain who seduced the affection of this 'unfortunate woman. I admitted the 'traitor into my friendship and confidence, relieved him in his necessities, 'and, like the ungrateful viper, he 'bath stung the very bosom that cherished him in his distress.' Then he proceeded to inform Madam Clement how he had delivered that same Renaldo from prison, maintained him afterwards at a great expence, and at length furnished him with a sum of money, and proper credentials, to support his interest at the court of Vienna.

Having finished this detail, he asked the physician's sentiments of his wife's distemper, and being told that her life was in extreme jeopardy, begged he would use his utmost endeavours in her behalf, and even made him a tender of an extraordinary fee, which was refused; he also thanked Madam Clement for her charity and benevolence towards a stranger, and took his leave, with many polite professions of gratitude and esteem. He had no sooner quitted the house, than the physician, who was a humane man, and a foreigner, began to caution the lady against his insinuations, observing, that some circumstances of the story, concerning Renaldo, were, to his particular knowledge, contrary to truth; for that he himself had been applied to for letters of recommendation, in behalf of Count Melville, by a Jew merchant of his acquaintance, who had supplied the young gentleman with money sufficient for his occasions, in consequence of a minute enquiry he had made into the character of Renaldo, who was, by all reports, a youth of strict honour, and untainted morals.

Madam Clement, thus cautioned, entered into deliberation with her own thoughts, and comparing the particulars of this account with those of Monimia's own story, she concluded, that Fathom was the very traitor he himself had described; and that he had, by abusing the confidence of both, effected a fatal breach between two innocent and deserving lovers. She accordingly looked upon him with horror and detestation; but, nevertheless, resolved to treat him with civility in the mean

time, that the poor young lady might not be disturbed in her last moments; for she had now lost all hopes of her recovery. Yet the fever abated, and in two days she retrieved the use of her reason; though the distemper had affected her lungs, and she was in all appearance doomed to linger a few weeks longer in a consumption.

Fathom was punctual in his visitation, though never admitted into her presence after the delirium vanished; and he had the opportunity of seeing her conveyed in a chariot to Kensington Gravel-pits, a place which may be termed the last stage of many a mortal peregrination. He now implicitly believed, that death would in a few days baffle all his designs upon the unfortunate Monimia; and foreseeing, that as he had owned himself her husband, he might be obliged to defray the expence incurred by her sickness and burial, he very prudently intermitted in his visits, and had recourse to the intelligence of his auxiliary.

As for Monimia, she approached the goal of life; not simply with resignation, but with rapture: she enjoyed in tranquillity, the conversation of her kind benefactress, who never stirred from her apartment; she was blessed with the spiritual consolation of a worthy clergyman, who removed all her religious scruples; and she congratulated herself on the near prospect of that land of peace where sorrow is not known.

At length Mrs. La Mer gave notice to our adventurer of this amiable young lady's decease, and the time fixed for the interment; upon which these two virtuous associates took possession of a place, from whence they could, unperceived, behold the funeral. He must have a hard heart, who without an emotion of pity can see the last offices performed to a young creature cut off in the flower of youth and beauty, even though he knows not her name, and is an utter stranger to her virtues: how callous, then, must the soul of that wretch have been, who, without a symptom of remorse or concern, saw the sable hearse adorned with white plumes, as emblems of Monimia's purity, pass before him, while her incomparable merit stood full in his remembrance, and he knew himself the wicked cause of her untimely fate!

Perfidious

Perfidious wretch! thy crimes turn out so atrocious that I half repent me of having undertaken to record thy Memoirs; yet such monsters ought to be exhibited to publick view, that mankind may be upon their guard against impostures; that the world may see how fraud is apt to over-shoot itself: and that, as virtue, though it may suffer for a while, will triumph in the end; so iniquity, though it may prosper for a season, will at last be overtaken by that punishment and disgrace which are it's due.

C H A P. XV.

FATHOM SHIFTS THE SCENE, AND APPEARS IN A NEW CHARACTER.

FATHOM's expectations, with respect to the fair orphan, having thus proved abortive, he lost no time in bewailing his miscarriage, but had immediate recourse to other means of improving his small fortune, which at this period amounted to near two hundred pounds. Whatever inclination he had to resume the character he had formerly bore in the polite world, he durst not venture to launch out again into the expence necessary to maintain that station, because his former resources were now stopped, and all the people of fashion, by this time, convinced of his being a needy adventurer. Nevertheless, he resolved to sound the sentiments of his old friends at a distance, and judge, from the reception he should meet with, how far he might presume upon their countenance and favour; for he rightly supposed, that if he could in any shape contribute to their interest or amusement, they would easily forgive his former pretensions to quality, arrogant as they were, and still entertain him on the footing of a necessary acquaintance.

With this view, he one day presented himself at court in a very gay suit of cloaths, and bowed at a distance to many of his old fashionable friends of both sexes, not one of whom favoured him with any other notice, than that of a quarter curtsy, or slight inclination of the head; for, by this time, the few that remembered him knew from what retirement he now emerged, and avoided

him accordingly as the gaol infection; but the greater part of those who had cultivated him in the zenith of his fortune, were now utter strangers to his person, which they had actually forgot, amidst the succession of novelties that surrounded them; or, if they did recollect his name, it was remembered as an old fashion which had been many months out of date.

Notwithstanding these mortifying discouragements, our hero, that same evening, effected a lodgment in a certain gaming-house not far from St. James's; and, as he played pretty high, and made a parade of his ready-money, he was soon recognized by divers persons of consequence, who cordially welcomed him to England, on pretence of believing he had been abroad, and with great complacency, repeated their former professions of friendship. Though this was a certain way of retaining the favour of those worthies, while his finances continued to flourish, and his payments were prompt, he knew the weakness of his funds too well, to think they could bear the vicissitudes of play; and the remembrance of the two British knights who had spoiled him at Paris, hung over his imagination with the most frightful presages: besides, he perceived that gaming was now managed in such a manner, as rendered skill and dexterity of no advantage; for the spirit of play having overspread the land like a pestilence, raged to such a degree of madness and desperation, that the unhappy people who were infected, laid aside all thoughts of amusement, oeconomy, or caution, and risked their fortunes upon issues equally extravagant, childish, and absurd.

The whole mystery of the art was reduced to the simple exercise of tossing up a guinea; and the lust of laying wagers, which they indulged to a surprising pitch, of ridiculous intemperance. In one corner of the room might be heard a pair of lordlings running their grandmothers against each other, that is, betting sums on the longest liver; in another, the success of the wager depended upon the sex of the landlady's next child; and one of the waiters happening to drop down in an apoplectic fit, a certain noble peer exclaimed, 'Dead, for a thousand pounds!' The challenge was immediately accepted; and when the master of the house stood

for a surgeon to attempt the cure, the nobleman who set the price upon the patient's head, insisted upon his being left to the efforts of nature alone, otherwise the wager should be void: nay, when the landlord harped upon the loss he should sustain by the death of a trusty servant, his lordship obviated the objection, by desiring that the fellow might be charged in the bill.

In short, the rage of gaming seemed to have devoured all their other faculties, and to have equalled the rash enthusiasm of the inhabitants of Malacca in the East-Indies, who are so possessed with that pernicious spirit, that they sacrifice to it not only their fortunes, but also their wives and children; and then letting their hair down upon their shoulders, in imitation of the ancient Lacedemonians when they devoted themselves to death, those wretches unsheathe their daggers and murder every living creature in their way. In this, however, they differ from the gamblers of our country, who never find their senses, until they have lost their fortunes, and beggared their families; whereas, the Malayse never *run a muck*, but in consequence of misery and despair.

Such are the amusements, or rather, such is the continual employment of those hopeful youths who are destined by birth to be the judges of our property, and pillars of our constitution; such are the heirs and representatives of those patriots who planned, and those heroes who maintained the laws and freedom of their country; who were the patrons of merit, the fathers of the poor, the terror of vice and immorality; and, at once, the ornaments and support of a happy nation.

Our adventurer considered all these circumstances with his wonted sagacity, and seeing upon what precarious footing he must stand, should he rank himself with such society, he wisely came to the resolution of descending one step in the degrees of life, and of taking upon him the title of physician, under which he did not despair of insinuating himself into the pockets of his patients, and into the secrets of private families, so as to acquire a comfortable share of practice, or captivate the heart of some heiress or rich widow, whose fortune would at once render him independent and happy.

After this determination, his next care

was to concert measures for his first appearance in this new character; well knowing that the success of a physician in a great measure depends upon the external equipage in which he first declares himself an adept in the healing art. He first of all procured a few books on the subject of medicine, which he studied with great attention during the remaining part of the winter and spring, and repaired to Tunbridge with the first of the season, where he appeared in the uniform of *Æsculapius*, namely, a plain suit full trimmed, with a voluminous tye-perriwig; believing that, in this place, he might glide, as it were, imperceptibly, into the functions of his new employment, and gradually accustom himself to the method and form of prescription.

A man so well known in the gay world could not be supposed to effect such a transformation, without being observed; and therefore, in order to anticipate the censure and ridicule of those who might be tempted to make themselves merry at his expence, he, on his arrival at the wells, repaired to the shop of an apothecary, and calling for pen, ink, and paper, wrote a prescription, which he desired might be immediately made up. While this was doing by the servant, he was invited into a parlour by the master, with whom he entered into conversation, touching the property of the Tunbridge-water, which seemed to have been his particular study: and, indeed, he had perused Rouzee's Treatise on that subject, with indefatigable assiduity. From this theme, he made digressions into other parts of medicine, upon which he spoke with such plausible elocution, that the apothecary, whose knowledge in that art was not very profound, looked upon him as a physician of great learning and experience, and hinted a desire of knowing his name and situation.

Fathom accordingly gave him to understand, that he had studied physick, and had taken his degrees at Padua, rather for his amusement, than with any view of exercising medicine, as he then could not possibly foresee the misfortunes which had since happened to his family, and by which he was now compelled to have recourse to a profession that was very much beneath the expectations of his birth. Yet he bore his disappointments with resignation and

and even good humour, and blessed his stars for having inclined him to the study of any branch of knowledge by which he might be enabled to laugh at the vicissitudes of fortune. He then observed, that he had practised with some applause at the hot-well, near Britol, before he thought he should be ever reduced to the necessity of taking a fee; and that, in all probability, his metamorphosis, when known, would furnish matter of surprize and merriment to some of his old acquaintance.

The apothecary was really struck with his polite address, and pleased with his agreeable discourse; he consoled him for the misfortunes of his family, by assuring him, that in England nothing could be more honourable, or indeed profitable, than the character of a physician, provided he could once wriggle himself into practice; and insinuated, that, although he was restricted by certain engagements with other persons of the faculty, he should be glad of an opportunity to shew his regard for Doctor Fathom. This was a very effectual method which our hero took to intimate his new character to the publick. By the industry and communicative disposition of the apothecary, it was circulated in half a day through every family in the place; and next morning, when Ferdinand appeared, the company forthwith assembled in separate groupes, and from each knot he heard his name reverberated in a whisper.

Having thus announced himself to all whom it might concern, and allowed the ladies two days to discuss the merit of his transfiguration, together with the novelty of the case, he ventured to salute, at a distance, a lady and her daughter, who had been his patients at the hot-well; and, although they honoured his bow with the return of a slight curtsy, they gave him not the least encouragement to make a nearer approach. Notwithstanding this rebuff, he concluded, that, should the health of either come in question, they would renew their application to his skill, and what was refused by their pride, would be granted by their apprehension. Here, however, he happened to be mistaken in his conjecture.

The young lady being seized with a violent head-ache and palpitation, her mother desired the apothecary to recommend a physician; and the person

with whom he was contracted, being at that time absent, he proposed Doctor Fathom as a man of great ability and discretion: but the good lady rejected the proposal with disdain, because she had formerly known him in the character of a count; though that very character was the chief reason that had then induced her to crave his advice.

Such is the caprice of the world in general, that whatever bears the face of novelty, captivates, or rather bewitches the imagination, and confounds the ideas of reason and common sense. If, for example, a scullion from the clinking of pewter should conceive a taste for the clinking of rhyme, and make shift to bring together twenty syllables, so as that the tenth and last shall have the like ending, the composition is immediately extolled as a miracle; and what appeals to the admiration, is not the wit, the elegance or poetry of the work, but the uncultivated talent, and humble station of the author. A reader does not exclaim, 'What a delicate sentiment! what a beautiful simile! what easy and musical versification!' but cries in rapture, 'Heavens, what a prodigy! a poet from the scullery! a muse in livery! or, Apollo with a trowel!' The publick is astonished into liberality; the scullion eats from those trenchers he scowered before; the footman is admitted into the coach, behind which he was wont to stand; and the bricklayer, instead of plaitering walls, bedaubs his *illustrious partner* with the mortar of his praise. Thus, lifted into a higher sphere, their talents receive cultivation; they become professed bards; and though their subsequent works bear evident marks of improvement, they are neglected among the rest of their brethren; because that novelty, which recommended them in the beginning, no longer remains.

So it fared with our adventurer in his new occupation. There was something so extraordinary in a nobleman's understanding medicine; and so uncommon in a physician's prescribing gratis, that the curiosity and admiration of the company at Britol were engaged, and they followed his advice, as the direction of some supernatural intelligence; but now that he professed himself one of the faculty, and might be supposed to have refreshed his memory, and reinforced his knowledge

for the occasion, he was as much overlooked as any other physician unsupported by interest or cabal; or, at least, the notice he attracted was not at all to the advantage of his character, because it wholly regarded the decline of his fortune, which is a never-failing fund of disgrace.

These mortifications did not overcome the patience and perseverance of Fathom, who foresaw that the soothing hand of time would cast a veil of oblivion over those scenes which were remembered to his prejudice; and that, in the mean time, though he was excluded from the private parties of the fair-sex, in which his main hope of success was placed, he should be able to insinuate himself into some degree of favour and practice among the male patients; and some lucky cure, properly displayed, might be the means of propagating his fame, and banishing that reserve which at present interfered with his purpose. Accordingly, it was not long before he found means to break that spell of universal prejudice that hedged him in. At the ordinary which he frequented, his polite carriage, facetious remarks, and agreeable stories, soon conciliated the regard of his fellow guests, among whom he sometimes rallied his own transformation with singular good humour and success: he was even witty upon his want of employment; and used to observe, that a physician, without practice, had one comfort to which his brethren were strangers, namely, that the seldomer he had occasion to prescribe, the less he had upon his conscience on account of being accessory to the death of his fellow-creatures.

Nothing so effectually blunts the shafts of ridicule, and defeats the aims of slander, as this method of anticipation. In spite of the arrows that were levelled against his reputation from every tea-table at Tunbridge, he made his party good among almost all the gay young gentlemen that frequented the place; far from avoiding his company, they began to court his conversation, and he was commonly seen in the walks surrounded with a group of admirers.

Having thus paved the way for a total removal of the invidious prepossession that obstructed his views, the one night, while every person was lulled in the arms of repose, and universal silence

prevailed, tuned his violin, and began to play some masterly airs, in a tone so uncommonly expressive, and with such ravishing dexterity of execution, that a certain lady who lodged in the same house, being waked by the musick, and ignorant of the source from which it flowed, listened with rapture, as to the harp of an angel; and wrapping herself in a loose gown, rose and opened her chamber-door, in order to discover in what apartment the musician resided. She no sooner entered the passage, than she found her fellow-lodgers already assembled on the same occasion; and there they remained during the best part of the night, transported by the harmony which our hero produced.

Doctor Fathom was immediately known to be the author of this entertainment; and thus retrieved the benefit of that admiration which he had forfeited by appearing in the shape of a physician: for, as people had formerly wondered to see a count skilled in medicine; they were now amazed to find a physician such a master in musick.

The good effects of this stratagem were almost instantaneous. His performance became the topick of discourse among all the fashionable company: his male friends complimented him from the information of the other sex; and the lady whom he had regaled, instead of that shyness and disdain with which she used to receive his salutation, at their very next meeting in the Thoroughfare returned his bow with marks of profound respect. Nay, at midnight, she, with the rest, took post in the same place where they had been stationed before; and by frequent tittering, and repeated whispers, gave intimation to Fathom, that they would be glad of a second serenade. But he was too well acquainted with the human passions to indulge this their desire: it was his interest to inflame their impatience, rather than to gratify their expectation; and therefore he tantalized them for some hours, by tuning his violin, and playing some flourishes, which however produced nothing to fulfil their wishes.

At the ordinary he was accosted by a gentleman, a lodger in the same house, who assured him, that the ladies would take it as a great favour, if he would let them know when he intended to amuse himself again with his instrument, that they might not, by falling asleep before-hand,

hand, deprive themselves of the pleasure of hearing his musick. To this message he replied with an air of consequence and reserve; that, though musick was not the art he professed, he should be always complaisant enough to entertain the ladies to the utmost of his power, when their commands were signified to him in a manner suited to his character; but that he would never put himself on the footing of an itinerant harper, whose musick is tolerated through the medium of a board partition. The gentleman having reported this answer to his constituents, they empowered him to invite Doctor Fathom to breakfast, and he was next morning introduced with the usual ceremony, and treated with uncommon regard by all the females of the house, assembled for his reception.

Having thus broke the ice of their aversion, in one part, so as that the beams of his personal accomplishment had room to operate, he soon effected a general thaw in his favour, and found himself growing once more into request among the most amiable part of the creation. His company was coveted, and his taste consulted in their balls, concerts, and private assemblies; and he recommenced the regard they paid to him, with an incessant exertion of his agreeable talents, politeness, and good humour.

CHAP. XVI.

TRIUMPHS OVER A MEDICAL RIVAL

YET, in the midst of all this attention, his medical capacity seemed to be quite forgot. They respected his good breeding, were charmed with his voice, and admired the fine touches of his hand upon the violin; but, in cultivating the fiddler, they utterly neglected the physician; and in vain did he attempt to divide their regard, by taking all opportunities to turn the conversation into a more interesting channel. It was to little purpose he endeavoured to arouse the wonder of his audience with frequent descriptions of portentous maladies and amazing cures he had seen and performed in the course of his study and practice abroad; and to no effect did he publicly busy himself in making experiments on the mineral water, in which he pretended to have made several new

and important discoveries. These efforts did not make a lasting impression upon the minds of the company, because they saw nothing surprizing in a physician's being acquainted with all the myteries of his art; and, as their custom was already bespoke for others of the profession, whom it was their interest to employ, our adventurer might have starved amidst the caresses of his acquaintance, had not he derived considerable advantage from a lucky accident in the course of his expectancy.

A gentlewoman's daughter, of a weakly constitution, by drinking the waters, had so far recovered her health and complexion, as to allure the affection of a young squire in the neighbourhood, who amused her for some time with his addresses, until his heart was seduced by the charms of another young lady lately arrived at the wells. The forsaken nymph, shocked at this disgrace and mortification, relapsed into her former languishing disorder, and was by her mother put under the management and prescription of a physician, who had been an industrious enemy of Fathom, from his first appearance at Tunbridge. The patient, though violently chagrined at the levity of her quondam admirer, was not altogether without hope, that the very same inconstancy which had prompted him to leave her, might in time induce him to return, after the novelty of his new passion should be wore off; and this hope served to support her under the sorrow and disgrace of her disappointment. At length, however, the squire and his new mistress disappeared, and some busy body was officious enough to communicate this piece of news to the forlorn shepherdes, with this additional circumstance, that they were gone to a neighbouring parish, to be joined in the bands of wedlock.

These fatal tidings were no sooner imparted to the abandoned Phillis, than she was seized with an hysserick fit; and, what rendered the accident more unfortunate, her physician had been called to the country, and was not expected at Tunbridge till next day. The apothecary was immediately summoned; and, being either puzzled by the symptoms, or afraid of encroaching upon the province of his superiors, advised the old lady to send for Doctor Fathom without delay. She had no other objection to this expedient, but the enmity which she knew

knew subsisted between the two leeches: yet, hearing that her own doctor would not consult with Fathom upon his return, but perhaps renounce the patient, by which means her daughter's health might be endangered, she would not solicit our hero's assistance until the young lady had remained seven hours speechless and insensible; when, her fear prevailing over every other consideration, she implored the advice of our adventurer; who, having made the necessary interrogations, and felt the patient's pulse, which was regular and distinct, found reason to conclude, that the fit would not last much longer; and, after having observed that she was in a very dangerous way, prescribed some medicines for external application; and, to inhance their opinion of his diligence and humanity, resolved to stay in the room and observe their effect.

His judgment did not fail him on this occasion. In less than half an hour after his embrocations had been applied, she recovered the use of her tongue, opened her eyes, and having, in delirious exclamations, upbraided her perfidious lover, became quite sensible and composed; though she continued extremely low and dejected: to remedy these sinkings, certain cordials were immediately administered, according to the prescription of Doctor Fathom, upon whom extraordinary encomiums were bestowed by all present, who believed he had actually rescued her from the jaws of death; and as he was by this time let into the secrets of the family, he found himself in a fair way of being an egregious favourite of the old gentlewoman: when, unluckily, his brother, having dismissed his country patient with uncommon dispatch, entered the apartment, and eyed his rival with looks of inexpressible rage; then surveying the patient and the phials that stood upon the table by turns, 'What, in the name of God,' cried he, 'is the meaning of all this trash?'

'Really, doctor,' replied the mother, a little confounded at being thus taken by surprise, 'Biddy has been taken dangerously ill, and lain seven or eight hours in a severe fit, from which, I am confident, she would never have recovered without the help of a physician; and as you were absent, we had recourse to this gentleman, whose prescription hath had a happy and surprising effect.'—'Effect!' cried

this offended member of the faculty; 'pshaw! stuff! who made you judge of effects or causes?' Then advancing to the patient, 'What has been the matter, Miss Biddy, that you could not wait till my return?'

Here Fathom interposing, 'Sir,' said he, 'if you will step into the next room I will communicate my sentiments of the case, together with the method upon which I have proceeded, that we may deliberate upon the next step that is to be taken.' Instead of complying with this proposal, he seated himself in a chair, with his back to our adventurer, and while he examined Miss Biddy's pulse, gave him to understand, that he should not consult with him about the matter.

Fathom, not in the least disconcerted at this uncivil answer, walked round his antagonist, and placing himself in his front, desired to know his reason for treating him with such supercilious contempt. 'I am resolved,' said the other, 'never to consult with any physician who has not taken his degrees at either of the English universities.'—'Upon the supposition,' replied our adventurer, 'that no person can be properly educated for the profession at any other school?'—'You are in the right,' answered Doctor Looby, 'that is one of many reasons I have to decline the consultation.'

'How far you are in the right,' retorted Fathom, 'I leave the world to judge, after I have observed, that in your English universities, there is no opportunity of studying the art; no, not so much as a lecture given on the subject; nor is there one physician of note in this kingdom, who has not derived the greatest part of his medical knowledge from the instructions of foreigners.'

Looby, incensed at this asseveration, which he was not prepared to refute, exclaimed in a most infuriate accent, 'Who are you? Whence came you? Where was you bred? You are one of those, I believe, who graduate themselves, and commence doctors, the Lord knows how! an interloper, who, without license or authority, came hither to take the bread out of the mouths of gentlemen, who have been trained to the business in a regular manner, and bestowed great pains and expence to qualify themselves for the profession.'

profession: for my own part, my education cost me fifteen hundred pounds.'

'Never was money laid out to less purpose,' said Ferdinand; 'for it does not appear that you have learned so much as the basis of medical acquirements, namely, that decorum and urbanity which ought to distinguish the deportment of every physician: you have even debased the noblest and most beneficial art that ever engaged the study of mankind, which cannot be too much cultivated, and too little restrained, in seeking to limit the practice of it to a set of narrow-minded illiberal wretches; who, like the lowest handicraftsmen, claim the exclusive privileges of a corporation; had you doubted my ability, you ought to have satisfied yourself in a manner consistent with decency and candour; but your behaviour, on this occasion, is such a malicious outrage upon good manners and humanity, that, were it not for my regard to these ladies, I would chastise you for your insolence on the spot.—Meanwhile, Madam,' addressing himself to the mother, 'you must give me leave to insist upon your dismissing either that gentleman or me without hesitation.'

This peremptory language had an instantaneous effect upon the hearers. Looby's face grew pale, and his nether lip began to tremble; the patient was dismayed; and the old gentlewoman concerned and perplexed: she earnestly besought the gentlemen to be reconciled to each other, and enter into a friendly consultation upon her daughter's distemper; but finding both equally averse to accommodation, and Fathom becoming more and more importunate in his demand, she presented him with a double fee; and giving him to understand, that Doctor Looby had long attended the family, and was intimately acquainted with her own and Biddy's constitution, said, she hoped he would not take it amiss if she retained her old physician.

Though our hero was much mortified at this triumph of his rival, he made a virtue of necessity, and retired with great complaisance, wishing, that Miss Biddy might never again be the subject of such a disagreeable dispute. Whether the patient was frightened at this altercation, or displeased with her mother's decision against an agreeable young fellow, who had, as it were, recalled her from the

grave, and made himself master of the secret that rankled at her heart; or the disease had wound up her nerves for another paroxysm; certain it is, she all of a sudden broke forth into a violent peal of laughter, which was succeeded by the most doleful cries, and other expressions of grief; then she relapsed into a fit, attended with strong convulsions, to the unspeakable terror of the old gentlewoman, who intreated Doctor Looby to be expeditious in his prescription; accordingly, he seized the pen with great confidence, and a whole magazine of anti-hysterick medicines were, in different forms, externally and internally applied.

Nevertheless, either Nature was disturbed in her own efforts by these applications, or the patient was resolved to disgrace the doctor: for the more remedies that were administered, her convulsions became the more violent; and, in spite of all his endeavours, he could not overcome the obstinacy of the distemper. Such a miscarriage upon the back of his rival's success, could not fail to overwhelm him with confusion; especially as the mother baited him with repeated intreaties to do something for the recovery of her daughter. At length, after having exercised her patience in vain for several hours, this affectionate parent could no longer suppress the suggestions of her concern, but, in an incoherent strain, told him, that her duty would not suffer her to be longer silent in an affair on which depended the life of her dear child: that she had seen enough to believe he had mistaken the case of poor Biddy; and he could not justly blame her for recalling Doctor Fathom, whose prescription had operated in a miraculous manner.

Looby, shocked at this proposal, protested against it with great vehemence, as an expedient highly injurious to himself. 'My remedies,' said he, 'are just beginning to take effect, and in all probability the fit will not last much longer; so that by calling in another person at this juncture, you will defraud me of that credit which is my due, and deck my adversary with trophies, to which he has no pretension.' She was prevailed upon, by this remonstrance, to wait another half hour, when perceiving, as yet, no alteration for the better, and being distracted with her fears, which reproached her with want
of

of natural affection, she sent a message to Doctor Fathom, desiring to see him with all possible dispatch.

He was not slow in obeying the call; but hastening to the scene of action, was not a little surprized to find Looby still in the apartment. This gentleman, since better might not be, resolved to sacrifice his pride to his interest, and, rather than lose his patient altogether, and run the risk of forfeiting his reputation at the same time, staid with intention to compromise his difference with Fathom, that he might not be wholly excluded from the honour of the cure, in case it could be effected. But he reckoned without his host, in his calculation of the count's placability; for, when he put on his capitulating face, and, after a slight apology for his late behaviour, proposed that all animosity should subside in favour of the young lady, whose life was at stake, our hero rejected his advances with infinite disdain, and assured the mother, in a very solemn tone, that far from consulting with a man who had treated him so unworthily, he would not stay another minute in the house unless he should see him discarded: a satisfaction barely sufficient to atone for the affront he himself had suffered by the unjust preference she had before given to his rival.

There was no remedy: Looby was obliged to retreat in his turn; then our adventurer approaching the bed-side, reconnoitred the patient, examined the medicines which had been administered, and lifting up his eyes in expressive silence, detached the footman with a new order to the apothecary. It was well the messenger used expedition, otherwise Doctor Fathom would have been anticipated by the operation of nature; for, the fit having almost run its career, Miss Biddy was on the point of retrieving her senses, when the frontal prescribed by Fathom was applied; to the efficacy of this, therefore, was ascribed her recovery, when she opened her eyes, and began to pour forth unconnected ejaculations; and in a few moments after, she was persuaded to swallow a draught prepared for the purpose, her perception returned, and Ferdinand gained the reputation of having performed a second miracle.

But he was furnished with a piece of intelligence of much more energy than all she had taken; and so soon as he con-

cluded she was capable to bear the news without any dangerous emotion, he, among other articles of chit-chat culled for her amusement, took the opportunity of telling the company, that Squire Stub (the cause of Miss Biddy's disorder) had, in his way to matrimony, been robbed of his bride, by a gentleman to whom she had been formerly engaged. He had waited for her on purpose at an inn on the road, where he found means to appease her displeasure, which he had, it seems, incurred, and to supersede her new lover, whom she quitted without ceremony; upon which the squire had returned to Tunbridge, cursing her levity; yet blessing his good stars for having so seasonably prevented his ruin, which would have infallibly been the consequence of his marrying such an adventurer.

It would be superfluous to observe, that these tidings operated like an admirable specifick on the spirits of the young lady; who, while she affected to pity the squire, was so much overjoyed at his disappointment, that her eyes began to sparkle with uncommon vivacity, and in less than two hours after the last of those terrible attacks, she was restored to a better state of health than she had enjoyed for many weeks. Fathom was not forgot amidst the rejoicings of the family: besides an handsome gratuity for the effects of his extraordinary skill, the old lady favoured him with a general invitation to her house; and the daughter not only considered him as the restorer of her health, and angel of her good fortune, but also began to discover an uncommon relish for his conversation; so that he was struck with the prospect of succeeding Squire Stub in her affection: a conquest which, if sanctioned by the approbation of the mother, would console him for all the disappointments he had sustained; for Miss Biddy was intitled to a fortune of ten thousand pounds, provided she should marry with the consent of her parent; who was the sole executrix of the father's will.

Animated with the hope of such an advantageous match, our adventurer missed no opportunity of improving the lodgment he had made; while the two ladies failed not to extol his medical capacity among all their female acquaintance. By means of this circulation, his advice was demanded in several other cases,

cases, which he managed with such an imposing air of sagacity and importance, that his fame began to spread; and before the end of the season, he had ravished more than one half of the business from his competitor. Notwithstanding these fortunate events, he foresaw that he should find great difficulty in transplanting his reputation, so as to take root in London, which was the only soil in which he could propose to rise to any degree of prosperity and independence; and this reflection was grounded upon a maxim which universally prevails among the English people, namely, to overlook and wholly neglect, on their return to the metropolis, all the connections they may have chanced to acquire during their residence at any of the medical wells: and this social disposition is so scrupulously maintained, that two persons who lived in the most intimate correspondence at Bath or Tunbridge, shall in four and twenty hours so totally forget their friendship, as to meet in St. James's Park without betraying the least token of recognition; so that one would imagine those mineral waters were so many streams issuing from the river *Lethe*, so famed of old for washing away all traces of memory and recollection.

Aware of this oblivious principle, Doctor Fathom collected all his qualifications; in order to make such an impression upon the heart of Miss Biddy as would resist all her endeavours to shake him from her remembrance; and his efforts succeeded so well, that Squire Stub's advances to a reconciliation were treated with manifest indifference. In all probability, our hero would have made a very advantageous campaign, had not his good fortune been retarded by an obstruction, which (as he did not perceive it) he could not possibly surmount: in displaying his accomplishments to captivate the daughter, he had unwittingly made an absolute conquest of the mother, who superintended the conduct of Miss Biddy with such jealous vigilance, that he could find no opportunity of profiting by the progress he had made in her heart; for the careful matron would never lose sight of her, no, not for one moment.

Had the old lady given the least intimation to our adventurer, of the sentiments she entertained in his behalf, his complaisance was of such a pliable texture, that he would have quitted his

other pursuit, and made her the sole object of his attention: but she either depended upon the effect of his own good taste and discernment, or was too proud to disclose a passion which he had hitherto overlooked.

C H A P. XVII.

REPAIRS TO THE METROPOLIS,
AND ENROLS HIMSELF AMONG
THE SONS OF PÆAN.

BEFORE this affair could be brought to a proper explanation, the season being almost ended, the ladies departed from Tunbridge; and in a little time Doctor Fathom followed them to London, having previously obtained permission to visit them in that metropolis. He had solicited the same favour of some other families, in which he hoped to take root, though he knew they were pre-engaged to different physicians; and resolving to make his first medical appearance in London with some *eclat*, he not only purchased an old chariot, which was new-painted for the purpose, but likewise hired a footman, whom he cloathed in laced livery, in order to distinguish himself from the common run of his brethren.

This equipage, though much more expensive than his finances could bear, he found absolutely necessary to give him a chance for employment; as every shabby retainer to physick, in this capital, had provided himself with a vehicle, which was altogether used by way of a travelling sign-post, to draw in customers; so that a walking physician was considered as an obscure pedlar, trudging from street to street with his pack of knowledge on his shoulders, and selling his remnants of advice by retail. A chariot was not now set up for the convenience of a man sinking under the fatigue of extensive practice, but as a piece of furniture every way as necessary as a large perriwig with three tails; and a physician, let his merit in other respects be never so conspicuous, can no more expect to become considerable in business, without the assistance of this implement, than he can hope to live without food, or breathe without a wind-pipe.

This requisite is so well understood, that, exclusive of those who profess them-

selves doctors, every raw surgeon, every idle apothecary, who can make interest with some fool-hardy coachmaker, may be seen dancing the hays in all places of publick resort, and grinning to one another from their respective carriages. Hence proceed many of those cruel accidents which are recorded in the daily papers. An apothecary's horses take fright, and run away with his chariot, which is heard of no more; an eminent surgeon being overturned, is so terrified at the thoughts of mutilation, that he resolves to walk on foot all the days of his life; and the coachman of a physician of great practice, having the misfortune to be disabled by a fall from the box, his master can never find another to supply his place.

None of these observations escaped the penetrating eye of Fathom; who, before he pretended to seat himself in this machine, had made proper inquiry into all the other methods practised, with a view to keep the wheels in motion. In his researches, he found that the great world was wholly engrossed by a few practitioners who had arrived at the summit of reputation, consequently, were no longer obliged to cultivate those arts by which they rose; and that the rest of the business was parcelled out into small inclosures, occupied by different groupes of personages, male and female, who stood in rings, and tossed the ball from one to another; there being in each department two sets, the individuals of which relieved one another occasionally. Every knot was composed of a waiting-woman, nurse, apothecary, surgeon, and physician, and, sometimes, a midwife was admitted into the party; and in this manner the farce was commonly performed.

A fine lady, fatigued with idleness, complains of the vapours, is deprived of her rest, though not so sick as to have recourse to medicine: her favourite maid, tired with giving her attendance in the night, thinks proper, for the benefit of her own repose, to complain of a violent head-ache, and recommends to her mistress a nurse of approved tenderness and discretion; at whose house (in all likelihood) the said chamber-maid hath oft given the rendezvous to a male friend. The nurse, well skilled in the mysteries of her occupation, persuades the patient that her malady, far from being slight or chimerical, may proceed

to a very dangerous degree of the hysterical affection, unless it be nipped in the bud by some very effectual remedy: then she recounts a surprizing cure performed by a certain apothecary, and appeals to the testimony of the waiting-woman, who, being the gossip of his wife, confirms the evidence, and corroborates the proposal. The apothecary being summoned, finds her ladyship in such a delicate situation that he declines prescribing, and advises her to send for a physician without delay. The nomination of course, falls to him, and the doctor being called, declares the necessity of immediate venæsection, which is accordingly performed by the surgeon of the association.

This is one way of beginning the game; though the commencement often varies, and sometimes the apothecary, and sometimes the physician opens the scene; but, be that as it will, they always appear in a string, like a flight of wild geese, and each confederacy maintains a correspondence with one particular undertaker. Fathom, upon these considerations, set up his rest in the first floor of an apothecary in the neighbourhood of Charing-Cross, to whom he was introduced by a letter from a friend at Tunbridge, and who, being made acquainted with his ability and scheme, promised to let slip no opportunity of serving him; and, indeed, seemed to espouse his interest with great alacrity. He introduced him to some of his patients, on the strength of a gratis visit, sounded forth his praise among all the good women of his acquaintance, and even prevailed upon him to publish advertisements, importing that he would every day, at a certain time and place, give his advice to the poor for nothing; hoping, that by means of some lucky cure, his fame might be extended, and his practice grow into request.

In the mean time, his chariot rolled along through all the most frequented streets, during the whole forenoon; and at the usual hour, he never failed to make his appearance at the medical coffee-house, with all that solemnity of feature and address by which the modern sons of Pæan are distinguished; not but that he was often puzzled about the decision of his diurnal route: for the method of driving up one street and down another, without halting, was become

come such a stale expedient, that the very apprentices used to stand at the shop-doors, and ridicule the vain parade. At length, however, he perused the map of London with great diligence, and having acquired a distinct idea of it's topography, used to alight at the end of long narrow thoroughfares, and paved courts, where the chariot was ordered to wait till his return; and walking with great gravity through the different turnings of these alleys, regain his carriage by another passage, and resume his seat with an air of vast importance. With a view to protract the time of his supposed visits, he would at one place turn aside to the wall; at another, cheapen an urinal; at a third corner, read a quack advertisement, or lounge a few minutes in some bookseller's shop; and, lastly, glide into some obscure coffee-house, and treat himself with a dram of usquebaugh.

The other means used to force a trade, such as ordering himself to be called from church; alarming the neighbourhood with knocking at his door in the night; receiving sudden messages in places of resort: and inserting his cures by way of news in the daily papers, had been so injudiciously hacknied by every desperate sculler in physick, that they had lost their effect upon the publick, and therefore were excluded from the plan of our adventurer, whose scheme, for the present, was to exert himself in winning the favour of those sage sybils, who keep, as it were, the temple of medicine, and admit the young priest to the service of the altar; but this he considered as a temporary project only, until he should have acquired interest enough to erect an hospital, lock, or infirmary, by the voluntary subscription of his friends; a scheme which had succeeded to a miracle with many of the profession, who had raised themselves into notice, upon the carcases of the poor.

Yet, even this branch was already over-stocked, inasmuch that almost every street was furnished with one of these charitable receptacles, which, instead of diminishing the taxes for the maintenance of the poor, encouraged the vulgar to be idle and dissolute, by opening an asylum to them and their families, from the diseases of poverty and intemperance: for it remains to be proved, that the parish-rates are decreased, the

bills of mortality lessened, the people more numerous, or the streets less infested with beggars, notwithstanding the immense sums yearly granted by individuals for the relief of the indigent.

But, waving these reflections, Doctor Fathom hoped that his landlord would be a most useful implement for extending his influence; and, for that reason, admitted him into a degree of partnership; after being fully convinced, that he was not under articles to any other physician. Nevertheless, he was very much mistaken in reckoning on the importance of his new ally; who was, like himself, a needy adventurer, settled upon credit, and altogether unemployed, except among the very refuse of the people, whom no other person would take the trouble to attend: so that our hero got little else than experience and trouble, excepting a few guineas, which he made shift to glean among sojourners, with whom he became occasionally acquainted, or young people who had been unfortunate in their amours.

In the midst of these endeavours, he did not omit his duty to the old gentlewoman, whose daughter he had cured at Tunbridge; and was always received with particular complacency; which, perhaps, he in some measure owed to his genteel equipage, that gave credit to every door before which it was seen; yet Miss Biddy was as inaccessible as ever, while the mother became more and more warm in her civilities; till at length, after having prepared him with some extraordinary compliments, she gave him to understand, that Biddy was no better than a giddy-headed girl, far from being unexceptionable in her moral character, and particularly deficient in duty and gratitude to her, who had been always a tender and indulgent parent; she was therefore determined to punish the young minx, for her levity, and want of natural affection, by altering her own condition, could she find a worthy and agreeable man, on whom she could bestow her hand and fortune without a blush.

The film was instantly removed from Fathom's eyes by this declaration, which she uttered with such a significancy of look, as thrilled to his soul with joyful presage; while he replied, it would, indeed, be a difficult task to find a man

who merited such happiness and honour; but, surely, some there were, who would task their faculties to the uttermost, in manifesting their gratitude, and desire of rendering themselves worthy of such distinction. Though this answer was pronounced in such a manner, as gave her to understand he had taken the hint, she would not cheapen her condescension so much as to explain herself farther at that juncture, and he was very well contented to woo her on her own terms: accordingly, he began to season his behaviour with a spice of gallantry, when he had opportunities of being particular with this new innamorata; and, in proportion to the returns she made, he gradually detached himself from Miss Biddy, by intermitting, and at last discontinuing, those ardent expressions of love and admiration, which he had made shift to convey in private looks and stolen whispers, during the rancorous inspection of her mother.

Such alteration could not long escape the jealous eyes of the young lady, no more than the cause of this alienation, which in a moment converted all her love into irreconcilable hate, and filled her whole soul with the most eager desire of vengeance: for she now not only considered him as a mercenary wretch, who had slighted her attractions for the sordid gratifications of avarice, but also as an interloper, who wanted to intercept her fortune, in the odious character of a father-in-law. But, before she could bring her aim to any ripeness of contrivance, her mother having caught cold at church, was seized with a rheumatic fever, became delirious in less than three days, and, notwithstanding all the prescriptions and care of her admirer, gave up the ghost, without having retrieved the use of her senses, or been able to manifest, by will, the sentiments she entertained in favour of her physician, who (as the reader will easily perceive) had more reasons than one to be mortally chagrined at this event.

Miss Biddy being thus put in possession of the whole inheritance, not only renounced all correspondence with Doctor Fathom, by forbidding him the house, but likewise took all opportunities of prejudicing his character, by hinting, that her dear mamma had fallen a sacrifice to his ignorance and presumption.

C H A P. XVIII.

ACQUIRES EMPLOYMENT, IN CONSEQUENCE OF A LUCKY MISCARRIAGE.

THESE ill offices, however, far from answering her purpose, had a quite contrary effect: for, in consequence of her invectives, he was, in a few days, called to the wife of a merchant, who piously hoped that his practice would not give Miss Biddy the lye. The patient had long lingered under a complication of distempers, and being in no immediate danger of her life, Doctor Fathom was in no hurry to strike a decisive stroke; till the husband growing impatient of delay, and so explicit in his hints, that it was impossible to misapprehend his meaning, our adventurer resolved to do something effectual for his satisfaction, and prescribed a medicine of such rough operation, as he thought must either oblige his employer, or produce a change in the lady's constitution, that would make a noise in the world, and bring a new accession to his fame.

Proceeding upon these maxims, he could not be disappointed: the remedy played its part with such violence, as reduced the patient to extremity, and the merchant had actually bespoke an undertaker; when, after a series of swoonings and convulsions, Nature so far prevailed, as to expel at once the prescription and the disease; yet the good-natured husband was so much affected with the agonies to which he saw the wife of his bosom exposed by this specific, that, although the effect of it was her perfect recovery, he never could bear the sight of Fathom for the future, nor even hear his name mentioned, without giving signs of horror and indignation; nay, he did not scruple to affirm, that had our adventurer been endowed with the least tincture of humanity, he would have suffered the poor woman to depart in peace, rather than restore her to health at the expence of such anxiety and torture.

On the other hand, this extraordinary cure was blazoned abroad by the good lady and her gossips with such exaggerations, as roused the astonishment of the publick, and concurred with the re-
 • port

port of his last miscarriage, to bring him upon the carpet, as the universal subject of discourse. When a physician becomes the town talk, he generally concludes his business more than half done, even though his fame should wholly turn upon his mal-practice; inasmuch that some members of the faculty have been heard to complain, that they never had the good fortune to be publicly accused of homicide; and it is well known, that a certain famous empirick of our day never flourished to any degree of wealth and reputation, till after he had been attacked in print, and fairly convicted of having destroyed a good number of the human species. Success raised upon such a foundation, would, by a disciple of Plato, and some modern moralists, be ascribed to the innate virtue and generosity of the human heart, which naturally espouses the cause that needs protection: but I, whose notions of human excellence are not quite so sublime, am apt to believe it is owing to that spirit of self-conceit and contradiction, which is, at least, as universal, if not as natural, as the moral sense so warmly contended for by those ideal philosophers.

The most infamous wretch often finds his account in these principles of malevolence and self-love: for wheresoever his character falls under discussion, there is generally some person present, who, either from an affectation of singularity, or envy to the accusers, undertakes his defence, and endeavours to invalidate the articles of his impeachment, until he is heated by altercation, and hurried into more effectual measures for his advantage. If such benefits accrue to those who have no real merit to depend upon; surely our hero could not but reap something extraordinary from the debates to which he now gave rise; as by the miraculous cure he had effected, all his patient's friends, all the enemies of her husband, all those who envied his other adversary, were interested in his behalf, exclusive of such admirers as surprise and curiosity might engage in his cause.

Thus wafted upon the wings of applause, his fame soon diffused itself into all the corners of this great capital: the newspapers teemed with his praise; and in order to keep up the attention of the publick, his emissaries, male and female, separated into different coffee-houses, companies, and clubs, where they did

not fail to comment upon these articles of intelligence. Such a favourable incident is of itself sufficient to float the bark of a man's fortune: he was, in a few days, called to another lady, labouring under the same disorder he had so successfully dispelled; and she thought herself benefitted by his advice. His acquaintance naturally extended itself among the visitants and allies of his patients; he was recommended from family to family; the fees began to multiply; a variety of footmen appeared every day at his door; he discontinued his sham circuit; and, looking upon the present conjuncture as that tide in his affairs, which (according to Shakespeare) when taken at the full, leads on to fortune, he resolved, that the opportunity should not be lost, and applied himself with such assiduity to his practice, that, in all likelihood, he would have carried the palm from all his contemporaries, had not he split upon the same rock which had shipwrecked his hopes before.

We have formerly descanted upon that venereal appetite which glowed in the constitution of our adventurer, and which all his philosophy and caution could hardly keep within bounds: the reader, therefore, will not be much surprized to learn, that in the exercise of his profession he contracted an intimacy with a clergyman's wife, whom he attended as a physician, and whose conjugal virtue he subdued by a long and diligent exertion of his delusive arts, while her mind was enervated by sickness, and her husband abroad upon his necessary occasions. This unhappy patient, who was a woman of an agreeable person and lively conversation, fell a sacrifice to her own security and self-conceit: her want of health had confined her to a sedentary life, and her imagination being active and restless, she had spent those hours in reading which other young women devote to company and diversion; but, as her studies were not superintended by any person of taste, she had indulged her own fancy without method or propriety. The Spectator taught her to be a critick and philosopher; from plays she learned poetry and wit; and derived her knowledge of life from books of history and adventures. Fraught with these acquisitions, and furnished by Nature with uncommon vivacity, she despised her own sex, and courted the society of men, among whom she

she thought her talents might be more honourably displayed; fully confident of her own virtue and sagacity, which enabled her to set all their arts at defiance.

Thus qualified, she, in an evil hour, had recourse to the advice of our adventurer, for some ailment under which she had long laboured; and found such relief from his skill, as very much prepossessed her in his favour: she was no less pleased with his obliging manners, than with his physick; and found much entertainment in his conversation, so that the acquaintance proceeded to a degree of intimacy; during which, he perceived her weak side, and being enamoured of her person, flattered her out of all her caution. The privilege of his character furnished him with opportunities to lay snares for her virtue, and taking advantage of that littleness, languor, and indolence of the spirits, by which all the vigilance of the soul is relaxed, he, after a long course of attention and perseverance, found means to make shipwreck of her peace.

Though he mastered her chastity, he could not quiet her conscience, which incessantly upbraided her with breach of the marriage-vow; nor did her undoer escape without a share of the reproaches suggested by her penitence and remorse. This internal anxiety co-operating with her disease, and perhaps with the medicines he prescribed, reduced her to the brink of the grave; when her husband returned from a neighbouring kingdom, in consequence of her earnest request, joined to the information of her friends, who had written to him an account of the extremity in which she was. The good man was afflicted beyond measure, when he saw himself upon the verge of losing a wife whom he had always tenderly loved; but what were his emotions, when she, taking the first opportunity of his being alone with her, accosted him to this effect. 'I am now hastening towards that dissolution, from which no mortal is exempted; and though the prospect of futurity is altogether clouded and uncertain, my conscience will not allow me to plunge into eternity without unburdening my mind, and by an ingenuous confession, making all the atonement in my power for the ingratitude I have been guilty of, and the wrongs I have committed against a virtuous husband, who never

'gave me cause of complaint. You stand amazed at this preamble; but, alas! how will you be shocked when I own that I have betrayed you in your absence; that I have trespassed against God and my marriage-vow, and fallen from the pride and confidence of virtue to the most abject state of vice: yes, I have been unfaithful to your bed, having fallen a victim to the infernal insinuations of a villain, who took advantage of my weak and unguarded moments. Fathom is the wretch who hath thus injured your honour, and ruined my unsuspecting innocence. I have nothing to plead in alleviation of my crime but the most sincere contrition of heart; and though at any other juncture I could not expect your forgiveness; yet, as I now touch the goal of life, I trust in your humanity and benevolence for that pardon which will lighten the sorrows of my soul, and those prayers which I hope will entitle me to favour at the Throne of Grace.'

The poor husband was so much overwhelmed with grief and confusion at this unexpected address, that he could not recollect himself till after a pause of several minutes; when, uttering a hollow groan, 'I will not,' said he, 'aggravate your sufferings, by reproaching you with my wrongs; though your conduct hath been but an ill return for all my tenderness and esteem. I look upon it as a trial of my Christian patience, and bear my misfortune with resignation: meanwhile, I forgive you from my heart, and fervently pray, that your repentance may be acceptable to the Father of mercy.' So saying, he approached her bed-side, and embraced her in token of his sincerity. Whether this generous condescension diffused such a composure upon her spirits, as tended to the ease and refreshment of nature, which had been almost exhausted by disease and vexation; certain it is, that, from this day, she began to struggle with her malady in surprising efforts; and hourly gained ground, until her health was pretty well re-established.

This recovery was so far beyond the husband's expectation, that he began to make very serious reflections on the event, and even to wish he had not been quite so precipitate in pardoning the backslidings of his wife: for, though he

he could not withhold his compassion from a dying penitent, he did not at all relish the thoughts of cohabiting, as usual, with a wife, self-convicted of the violation of the matrimonial contract: he therefore considered his declaration as no more than a provisional pardon, to take place on condition of her immediate death; and, in a little time, not only communicated to her his sentiments on this subject, but also separated himself from her company, secured the evidence of her maid, who had been confidante in her amour with Fathom, and immediately set on foot a prosecution against our adventurer, whose behaviour to his wife he did not fail to promulgate, with all its aggravating circumstances. By these means the doctor's name became so notorious, that every man was afraid of admitting him into his house, and every woman ashamed of soliciting his advice.

CH A P. XIX.

HIS ECLIPSE, AND GRADUAL DECLINATION.

MISFORTUNES seldom come single: upon the back of this hue and cry, he unluckily prescribed phlebotomy to a gentleman of some rank, who chanced to expire during the operation; and quarrelled with his landlord the apothecary, who charged him with having forgot the good offices he had done him in the beginning of his career; and desired he would provide himself with another lodging.

All these mishaps treading upon the heels of one another, had a very mortifying effect upon his practice. At every tea-table, his name was occasionally put to the torture, with that of the vile creature whom he had seduced; though it was generally taken for granted, by all those female casuists, that she must have made the first advances; for it could not be supposed, that any man would take much trouble in laying schemes for the ruin of a person whose attractions were so slender, especially considering the ill state of her health, a circumstance that seldom adds to a woman's beauty or good humour; besides, she was always a pert minx, that affected singularity, and a masculine manner of speaking; and many of

them had foreseen, that she would, some time or other, bring herself into such a præmunire. At all gossipings, where the apothecary or his wife assisted, Fathom's pride, ingratitude, and malpractice, were canvassed; in all clubs of married men, he was mentioned with marks of abhorrence and detestation; and every medical coffee-house rung with his reproach. Instances of his ignorance and presumption were quoted, and many particulars feigned for the purpose of defamation; so that our hero was exactly in the situation of a horseman, who, in riding at full speed for the plate, is thrown from the saddle in the middle of the race, and left without sense or motion upon the plain. His progress, though rapid, had been so short, that he could not be supposed to have laid up store against such a day of trouble; and as he still cherished hopes of surmounting those obstacles which had so suddenly started up in his way, he would not resign his equipage, nor retrench his expences; but appeared, as usual, in all publick places, with that serenity and confidence of feature which he had never deposited; and maintained his external pomp, upon the little he had reserved in the days of his prosperity, and the credit he had acquired by the punctuality of his former payments. Both these funds, however, failed in a very little time: his law-suit was a gulph that swallowed up all his ready money; and the gleanings of his practice were scarce sufficient to answer his pocket expences, which now increased in proportion to the decrease of business; for as he had more idle time, and was less admitted into private families, so he thought he had more occasion to enlarge his acquaintance among his own sex, who alone were able to support him in his disgrace with the other. He accordingly listed himself in several clubs, and endeavoured to monopolize the venereal branch of trade: though this was but an indifferent resource; for almost all his patients of this class were such as either could not or would not properly recompence the physician.

For some time, he lingered in this situation, without going upwards or downwards, floating like a wisp of straw, at the turning of the tide, until he could no longer amuse the person of whom he had hired his coach-horses, or postpone the other demands, which multiplied upon

upon him every day. Then was his chariot overturned with a hideous crash, and his face so much wounded with the shivers of the glass, which went to pieces in the fall, that he appeared in the coffee-house with half a dozen black patches upon his countenance, gave a most circumstantial detail of the risk he had run, and declared, that he did not believe he should ever hazard himself again in any sort of wheel carriage.

Soon after this accident, he took an opportunity of telling his friends, in the same publick place, that he had turned away his footman, on account of his drunkenness, and was resolved, for the future, to keep none but maids in his service, because the men servants are generally impudent, lazy, debauched, or dishonest; and, after all, neither so neat, handy, or agreeable, as the other sex. In the rear of this resolution, he shifted his lodgings into a private court, being distracted with the din of carriages, that disturb the inhabitants who live towards the open street; and gave his acquaintance to understand, that he had a medical work upon the anvil, which he could not finish without being indulged in silence and tranquillity. In effect, he gradually put on the exteriors of an author; his watch, with an horizontal movement by Graham, which he had often mentioned, and shewn as a very curious piece of workmanship, began about this time to be very much out of order, and was committed to the care of a mender, who was in no hurry to restore it. His tye-wig degenerated into a major; he sometimes appeared without a sword, and was even observed in publick with a second day's shirt; at last, his cloaths became rusty, and when he walked about the streets, his head turned round in a surprizing manner, by an involuntary motion in his neck, which he had contracted by an habit of reconnoitring the ground, that he might avoid all dangerous or disagreeable encounters.

Fathom, finding himself descending the hill of fortune, with an acquired gravitation, strove to catch at every twig, in order to stop or retard his descent. He now regretted the opportunities he had neglected, of marrying one of several women of moderate fortune, who had made advances to him, in the zenith of his reputation; and endeavoured, by forcing himself into a

lower path of life than any he had hitherto trod, to keep himself afloat, with the portion of some tradesman's daughter, whom he meant to espouse. While he exerted himself in this pursuit, he happened, in returning from a place about thirty miles from London, to become acquainted, in the stage-coach, with a young woman, of a very homely appearance, whom, from the driver's information, he understood to be the niece of a country justice, and daughter of a soap-boiler, who had lived and died in London, and left her, in her infancy, sole heiress of his effects, which amounted to four thousand pounds. The uncle, who was her guardian, had kept her sacred from the knowledge of the world, resolving to effect a match betwixt her and his own son; and it was with much difficulty he had consented to this journey, which she had undertaken as a visit to her own mother, who had married a second husband in town.

Fraught with these anecdotes, Fathom began to put forth his gallantry and good humour; and, in a word, was admitted by the lady, to the privilege of an acquaintance, in which capacity he visited her during the term of her residence in London; and as there was no time to be lost, declared his honourable intentions: he had such a manifest advantage, in point of personal accomplishments, over the young gentleman who was destined for her husband, that she did not disdain his proposals, and before she set out for the country, he had made such progress in her heart, that the day was actually fixed for their nuptials, on which he faithfully promised to carry her off in a coach and six. How to raise money for this expedition, was all the difficulty that remained; for, by this time, his finances were utterly dried up, and his credit altogether exhausted. Upon a very pressing occasion, he had formerly applied himself to a certain wealthy quack, who had relieved his necessities by lending him a small sum of money, in return for having communicated to him a secret medicine, which he affirmed to be the most admirable specifick that ever was invented. The nostrum had been used, and luckily for him, succeeded in the trial; so that the empyrick, in the midst of his satisfaction, began to reflect, that this same Fathom, who pretended to be in possession of a great

great many remedies, equally efficacious, would certainly become a formidable rival to him, in his business, should he ever be able to extricate himself from his present difficulties.

In consequence of these suggestions, he resolved to keep our adventurer's head under water, by maintaining him in the most abject dependance; accordingly, he had from time to time accommodated him with small trifles, which barely served to support his existence, and even for these had taken notes of hand, that he might have a scourge over head, in case he should prove insolent or refractory. To this benefactor, Fathom applied for a reinforcement of twenty guineas, which he solicited with the more confidence, as that sum would certainly enable him to repay all other obligations. The quack would advance the money upon no other condition, than that of knowing the scheme, which being explained, he complied with Ferdinand's request; but, at the same time, privately dispatched an express to the young lady's uncle, with a full account of the whole conspiracy; so that when the doctor arrived at the inn, according to appointment, he was received by his worship in person, who gave him to understand, that his niece had changed her mind, and gone fifty miles farther into the country to visit a relation. This was a grievous disappointment to Fathom, who really believed his mistress had forsaken him through mere levity and caprice, and was not undeceived till several months after her marriage with her cousin, when, at an accidental meeting in London, she explained the story of the secret intelligence, and excused her marriage, as the effect of rigorous usage and compulsion.

Had our hero been really enamoured of her person, he might have probably accomplished his wishes, notwithstanding the steps she had taken; but this was not the case; his passion was of a different nature, and the object of it effectually without his reach. With regard to his appetite for women, as it was an infirmity of his constitution, which he could not overcome, and as he was in no condition to gratify it at a great expence, he had of late chosen a house-keeper from the hundreds of Drury, and to avoid scandal, allowed her to assume his name. As to the intimation which had been sent to the country justice, he

immediately imputed it to the true author, whom he marked for his vengeance accordingly; but, in the mean time, suppressed his resentment, because he in some measure depended upon him for subsistence. On the other hand, the quack, dreading the forwardness and plausibility of our hero, which might, one time or other, render him independant, put a stop to those supplies, on pretence of finding them inconvenient; but, out of his friendship and goodwill to Fathom, undertook to procure for him such letters of recommendation, as would infallibly make his fortune in the West-Indies, and even to fit him out in a genteel manner for the voyage. Ferdinand perceived his drift, and thanked him for his generous offer, which he would not fail to consider with all due deliberation; though he was determined against the proposal, but obliged to temporize, that he might not incur the displeasure of this man, at whose mercy he lay. Meanwhile the prosecution against him, in Doctors Commons, drew near a period, and the lawyers were clamorous for money, without which he foresaw he should lose the advantage which his cause had lately acquired by the death of his antagonist's chief evidence: he, therefore, seeing every other channel shut up, began to doubt, whether the risk of being apprehended or slain in the character of a highwayman, was not over-balanced by the prospect of being acquitted of a charge which had ruined his reputation and fortune, and actually entertained thoughts of taking the air on Hounslow Heath, when he was diverted from this expedient by a very singular adventure.

C H A P. XX.

AFTER DIVERS UNSUCCESSFUL EFFORTS, HE HAS RECOURSE TO THE MATRIMONIAL NOOSE.

CHANCING to meet with one of his acquaintance at a certain coffee-house, the discourse turned upon the characters of mankind, when, among other oddities, his friend brought upon the carpet a certain old gentlewoman of such a rapacious disposition, that, like a jackdaw, she never beheld any metalline substance without an inclination, and even an effort, to secrete it for her own use.

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and contemplation: nor was this infirmity originally produced from indigence, inasmuch as her circumstances had been always affluent, and she was now possessed of a considerable sum of money in the funds; notwithstanding which, the avarice of her nature tempted her to let lodgings, though few people could live under the same roof with such an original; who, rather than be idle, had often filched pieces of her own plate, and charged her servants with the theft, or hinted suspicion of her lodgers. Fathom, struck with the description, soon perceived how this woman's disease might be converted to his advantage; and after having obtained sufficient intelligence, on pretence of satisfying his curiosity, he visited the widow, in consequence of a bill at her door, and actually hired an apartment in her house, whither he forthwith repaired with his innamorata. It was not long before he perceived, that his landlady's character had not been misrepresented; he fed her distemper with divers inconsiderable trinkets, such as copper medals, cork-screws, odd buckles, and a poultry seal set in silver, which were, at different times, laid as baits for her infirmity, and always conveyed away with remarkable eagerness, which he and his dulcinea took pleasure in observing from an unsuspected place. Thus confirmed in his opinion, he at length took an opportunity of exposing a metal watch that belonged to his mistress, and saw it seized, with great satisfaction, in the absence of his help-mate, who had gone abroad on purpose. According to instruction, she soon returned, and began to raise a terrible clamour about the loss of her watch; upon which she was consoled by her landlady, who seemed to doubt the integrity of the maid, and even proposed that Mrs. Fathom should apply to some justice of the peace, for a warrant to search the servant's trunk. The lady thanked her for the good advice, in compliance with which, she had immediate recourse to a magistrate, who granted a search-warrant, not against the maid, but the mistress; and she, in a little time, returned with the constable at her back.

These precautions being taken, Doctor Fathom desired a private conference with the old gentlewoman; in which he gave her to understand, that he had undoubted proofs of her having secreted,

not only the watch, but also several other odd things of less consequence, which he had lost since his residence in her house: he then shewed the warrant he had obtained against her, and asked, if she had any thing to offer, why the constable should not do his duty. Inexpressible were the anguish and confusion of the defendant, when she found herself thus entrapped, and reflected, that she was on the point of being detected of felony; for she at once concluded that the snare was laid for her, and knew that the officer of justice would certainly find the unlucky watch in one of the drawers of her scitore.

Tortured with these suggestions, afraid of publick disgrace, and dreading the consequence of legal conviction, she fell on her knees before the injured Fathom; and, after having imputed her crime to the temptations of necessity, implored his compassion, promised to restore the watch, and every thing she had taken, and begged he would dismiss the constable, that her reputation might not suffer in the eye of the world.

Ferdinand, with a severity of countenance purposely assumed, observed, that were she really indigent, he had charity enough to forgive what she had done; but, as he knew her circumstances were opulent, he looked upon this excuse as an aggravation of her guilt, which was certainly the effect of a vicious inclination; and he was therefore determined to prosecute her with the utmost severity of the law, as an example and terror to others, who might be infected with the same evil disposition. Finding him deaf to all her tears and intreaties, she changed the note, and offered him one hundred guineas if he would compromise the affair, and drop the prosecution, so as that her character should sustain no damage: after much argumentation, he consented to accept of double the sum, which being instantly paid in East-India bonds, Doctor Fathom told the constable, that the watch was found; and for once her reputation was patched up. This seasonable supply enabled our hero to stand trial with his adversary, who was nonsuited, and also to mend his external appearance, which of late had not been extremely magnificent.

Soon after this gleam of good fortune, a tradesman, to whom he was considerably indebted, seeing no other probable

bable means to recover his money, introduced Fathom to the acquaintance of a young widow who lodged at his house, and was said to be in possession of a considerable fortune. Considering the steps that were taking, it would have been almost impossible for him to miscarry in his addresses: the lady had been bred in the country, was unacquainted with the world, and of a very sanguine disposition, which her short trial of matrimony had not served to cool. Our adventurer was instructed to call at the tradesman's house, as if by accident, at an appointed time, when the widow was drinking tea with her landlady: on these occasions he always behaved to admiration. She liked his person, and praised his politeness, good humour, and good sense; his confederates extolled him as a prodigy of learning, taste, and good nature; they likewise represented him as a person on the eve of eclipsing all his competitors in physick; an acquaintance and intimacy soon ensued, nor was he restricted in point of opportunity. In a word, he succeeded in his endeavours; and one evening, on pretence of attending her to the play, he accompanied her to the Fleet, where they were married, in presence of the tradesman and his wife, who were of the party.

This grand affair being accomplished to his satisfaction, he next day visited her brother, who was a counsellor of the Temple, to make him acquainted with the step his sister had taken; and though the lawyer was not a little mortified, to find she had made such a clandestine match, he behaved civilly to his new brother-in-law, and gave him to understand, that his wife's fortune consisted of a jointure of one hundred and fifty pounds a year, and fifteen hundred pounds bequeathed to her during her widowhood, by her own father, who had taken the precaution of settling it in the hands of trustees, in such a manner as that any husband she might afterwards espouse should be restricted from encroaching upon the capital, which was reserved for the benefit of her heirs. This intimation was far from being agreeable to our hero, who had been informed, that this sum was absolutely at the lady's disposal, and had actually destined the greatest part of it for the payment of his debts, for defraying the

expence of furnishing an elegant house, and setting up a new equipage.

Notwithstanding this disappointment, he resolved to carry on his plan, upon the credit of his marriage, which was published in a very pompous article of the newspapers; a chariot was bespoke, a ready-furnished house immediately taken, and Doctor Fathom began to re-appear in all his former splendor.

His good friend the empirick, alarmed at this event, which not only raised our adventurer into the sphere of a dangerous rival, but also furnished him with means to revenge the ill office he had sustained at his hands, on the adventure of the former match; for, by this time, Fathom had given him some hints, importing, that he was not ignorant of his treacherous behaviour: roused, I say, by these considerations, he employed one of his emissaries, who had some knowledge of Fathom's brother-in-law, to prejudice him against our adventurer; whom he represented as a needy sharper, not only overwhelmed with debt and disgrace, but likewise previously married to a poor woman, who was prevented by nothing but want from seeking redress at law. To confirm these assertions, he gave him a detail of Fathom's incumbrances, which he had learned for the purpose, and even brought the counsellor in company with the person who had lived with our hero before marriage, and who was so much incensed at her abrupt dismissal, that she did not scruple to corroborate these allegations of the informer.

The lawyer, startled at this intelligence, set on foot a minute enquiry into the life and conversation of the doctor, which turned out so little to the advantage of his character and circumstances, that he resolved, if possible, to disunite him from his family; and, as a previous step, repeated to his sister all that he had heard to the prejudice of her husband, not forgetting to produce the evidence of his mistress, who laid claim to him by a prior title, which, she pretended, could be proved by the testimony of the clergyman who joined them. Such an explanation could not fail to inflame the resentment of the injured wife; who, at the very first opportunity, giving a loose to the impetuosity of her temper, upbraided our hero with the most bitter invectives for his perfidious dealing.

Ferdinand, conscious of his own innocence, which he had not always to plead, far from attempting to soothe her indignation, assumed the authority and prerogative of a husband, and sharply reprehended her for her credulity and indecent warmth. This rebuke, instead of silencing, gave new spirit and volubility to her reproaches, in the course of which, she plainly taxed him with want of honesty and affection, and said, that though his pretence was love, his aim was no other than a base design upon her fortune.

Fathom, stung with these accusations, which he really did not deserve, replied with uncommon heat, and charged her, in his turn, with want of sincerity and candour, in the false account she had given of that same fortune, before marriage; he even magnified his own condescension, in surrendering his liberty to a woman, who had so little to recommend her to the addresses of the other sex; a reflection which provoked this mild creature to such a degree of animosity, that, forgetting her duty and allegiance, she lent him a box on the ear, with such energy as made his eyes water; and he, for the honour of his manhood and sovereignty, having washed her face with a dish of tea, withdrew abruptly to a coffee-house in the neighbourhood, where he had not long remained, when his passion subsided, and he then saw the expediency of an immediate reconciliation, which he resolved to purchase even at the expence of a submission.

It was pity that such a salutary resolution had not been sooner taken; for, when he returned to his own house, he understood that Mrs. Fathom had gone abroad in a hackney-coach; and, upon examining her apartment, in lieu of her cloaths and trinkets, which she had removed with admirable dexterity and dispatch, he found this billet in one of the drawers of her bureau.

‘ SIR,

‘ **B** EING convinced that you are a cheat and an impostor, I have withdrawn myself from your cruelty and machinations, with a view to solicit the protection of the law; and I doubt not but I shall soon be able to prove, that you have no just title to,

‘ or demand upon, the person or effects
‘ of the unfortunate

‘ SARAH MUDDY.’

The time had been when Mr. Fathom would have allowed Mrs. Muddy to refine at her leisure, and blessed God for his happy deliverance; but at present the case was quite altered. Smarting as he was, from the expence of lawsuits, he dreaded a prosecution for bigamy, which (though he had justice on his side) he knew he could not of himself support; besides, all his other schemes of life were frustrated by this unlucky elopement: he therefore speedily determined to anticipate, as much as in him lay, the malice of his enemies, and to obtain, without delay, authentic documents of his marriage. With this view he hastened to the house of the tradesman; who, with his wife, had been witness to the ceremony and consummation; and, in order to interest them the more warmly in his cause, made a pathetick recital of this unhappy breach, in which he had suffered such injury and insult: but all his rhetoric would not avail; Mrs. Muddy had been before-hand with him, and had proved the better orator of the two; for she had assailed this honest couple with such tropes and figures of eloquence, as were altogether irresistible. Nevertheless, they heard our hero to an end, with great patience: then the wife, who was the common mouth upon all such occasions, contracting her features into a very formal disposition, ‘ I’ll assure you,’ said she, ‘ Doctor Fathom, my husband and I have been in a very great terrification and numbplush, to hear such bad things of a person, whom, as one may say, we thought a worthy gentleman, and were ready to serve at all times, by day and by night, as the saying is; and besides, for all that, you know, and God knows, as we are dustrious people, and work hard for what we get, and we have served gentlemen to our own harm, whereby my husband was last Tuesday served with a siterary, being that he was bound for an officer that ran away; and I said to my husband, “ Timothy,” says I, “ ’tis a very hard thing for one to ruin one’s self for stranger people. There’s Doctor Fathom,”

‘ says

‘ says I, “ his account comes to nine
“ and forty pounds seven shillings and
“ four-pence halfpenny;” and you
‘ know, doctor, that was before your
‘ last bill began: but, howsomever,
‘ little did I think, as how a gentleman
‘ of your learning, would go to deceive
‘ a poor gentlewoman, when you had
‘ another wife alive.’

In vain did our adventurer endeavour to vindicate himself from this aspersions; the good woman, like a great many modern disputants, proceeded with her declamation, without seeming to hear what was said on the other side of the question; and the husband was altogether neutral. At length, Ferdinand finding all his protestations ineffectual, ‘ Well,’ said he, ‘ though
‘ you are resolved, I see, to discredit
‘ all that I can say in opposition to that
‘ scandalous slander, of which I can
‘ easily acquit myself in a court of justice, surely you will not refuse to grant
‘ me a certificate, signifying, that you
‘ were present at the ceremony of my
‘ marriage with this unhappy woman.’
— ‘ You shall excuse us,’ replied the female orator; ‘ people cannot be too
‘ wary in signing their names, in this
‘ wicked world; many a one has been
‘ brought to ruination by signing his
‘ name, and my husband shall not, with
‘ my good-will, draw himself into such
‘ a primminery.’

Fathom, alarmed at this refusal, earnestly argued against the inhumanity and injustice of it, appealing to their own consciences for the reasonableness of his proposal; but, from the evasive answers of the wife, he had reason to believe, that, long before the time of trial, they would take care to have forgotten the whole transaction.

Though he was equally confounded and incensed at this instance of their perfidy, he durst not manifest his indignation, conscious of the advantage they had over him in divers respects; but resolved, without loss of time, to the lodging of the clergyman who had noosed him, resolved to consult his register, and secure his evidence. Here, too, his evil genius had got the start of him; for the worthy ecclesiastick not only could not recollect his features, or find his name in the register, but when importuned by his pressing remonstrances, took umbrage at the freedom of his behaviour, and threatened if he would not imme-

diately take himself away, to raise the posse of the Fleet, for the safety of his own person.

Rather than put the pastor to the trouble of alarming his flock, he retreated with a heavy heart, and went in quest of his mistress; whom he had dismissed at his marriage, in hopes of effecting a reconciliation, and preventing her from joining in the conspiracy against him; but, alas! he met with such a reception as he had reason to expect from a slighted woman, who had never felt any real attachment for his person. She did not upbraid him with his cruelty in leaving her as a mistress; but, with a species of effrontery, never enough to be admired, reproached him with his villainy, in abandoning her who was his true and lawful wife, to go and ruin a poor gentlewoman, by whose fortune he had been allured.

When he attempted to expostulate with this virago, upon the barbarity of this assertion, she very prudently declined engaging in private conversation with such an artful and wicked man, and calling up the people of the house, insisted upon his being conducted to the door.

C H A P. XXI.

IN WHICH HIS FORTUNE IS EFFECTUALLY STRANGLLED.

THE last resource, and that upon which he least depended, was the advice and assistance of his old friend the empirick, with whom still he maintained a slight correspondence; and to whose house he steered his course, in great perplexity and tribulation. That gentleman, instead of consoling him with assurances of friendship and protection, faithfully recapitulated all the instances of his indiscretion and misconduct, taxed him with want of sincerity in the West-India affair, as well as with want of honesty in his last marriage, while his former wife was alive; and finally, reminded him of his notes, which he desired might be immediately taken up, as he (the quack) had present occasion for a sum of money.

Ferdinand seeing it would be impracticable to derive any succour from this quarter, sneaked homewards, in order to hold a consultation with his own thoughts;

thoughts; and the first object that presented itself to his eyes, when he entered his apartment, was a letter from the tradesman, with his account inclosed, amounting to fifty-five pounds, which the writer desired might be paid without delay. Before he had time to peruse the articles, he received a summons, in consequence of a bill of indictment for bigamy, found against him in Hicks's Hall, by Sarah Muddy, widow; and while he was revolving measures to avert these storms, another billet arrived from a certain attorney, giving him to understand, that he had orders from Doctor Buffalo, the quack, to sue him for the payment of several notes, unless he would take them up in three days from the date of this letter.

Such a concurrence of sinister events made a deep impression upon the mind of our adventurer: all his fortitude was insufficient to bear him up against this torrent of misfortunes; his resources were all dried up, his invention failed, and his reflection began to take a new turn. 'To what purpose,' said he to himself, 'have I deserted the paths of integrity and truth, and exhausted a fruitful imagination in contriving schemes to betray my fellow-creatures; if, instead of acquiring a splendid fortune, which was my aim, I have suffered such a series of mortifications, and at last brought myself to the brink of inevitable destruction? By a virtuous exertion of those talents I inherit from nature and education, I might, long before this time, have rendered myself independent, and perhaps conspicuous in life; I might have grown up like a young oak, which being firmly rooted in it's kindred soil, gradually raises up it's lofty head, expands it's leafy arms, projects a noble shade, and towers the glory of the plain; I should have paid the debt of gratitude to my benefactors, and made their hearts sing with joy for the happy effects of their benevolence; I should have been a bulwark to my friends, a shelter to my neighbours in distress; I should have run the race of honour, seen my fame diffused like a sweet-smelling odour, and felt the ineffable pleasure of doing good: whereas, I am, after a vicissitude of disappointments, dangers, and fatigues, reduced to misery and shame, aggravated by a conscience loaded

with treachery and guilt. I have abused the confidence and generosity of my patron; I have defrauded his family under the mask of sincerity and attachment; I have taken the most cruel and base advantages of virtue in distress; I have seduced unsuspecting innocence to ruin and despair; I have violated the most sacred trust reposed in me by my friend and benefactor; I have betrayed his love, torn his noble heart asunder, by means of the most perfidious slander and false insinuations; and finally, brought to an untimely grave the fairest pattern of human beauty and perfection! Shall the author of these crimes pass with impunity? Shall he hope to prosper in the midst of such enormous guilt? It were an imputation upon Providence to suppose it. Ah, no! I begin to feel myself overtaken by the eternal justice of Heaven! I totter on the edge of wretchedness and woe, without one friendly hand to save me from the terrible abyss!

These reflections, which, perhaps, the misery of his fellow-creatures would never have inspired, had he himself remained without the verge of misfortune, were now produced from the sensation of his own calamities; and, for the first time, his cheeks were bedewed with the drops of penitence and sorrow. 'Contraries,' saith Plato, 'are productive of each other.' Reformation is oftentimes generated from unsuccessful vice; and our adventurer was, at this juncture, very well disposed to turn over a new leaf, in consequence of those salutary suggestions, though he was far from being cured beyond the possibility of a relapse: on the contrary, all the faculties of his soul were so well-adapted, and had been so long-habituated to deceit, that in order to extricate himself from the evils that environed him, he would not, in all probability, have scrupled to practise it upon his own father, had a convenient opportunity occurred.

Be that as it may, he certainly after a tedious and fruitless exercise of his invention, resolved to effect a clandestine retreat from that confederacy of enemies which he could not withstand, and once more join his fortune to that of Renaldo, whom he proposed to serve in the future with fidelity and affection, thereby endeavouring to atone for the treachery of his former conduct, thus determined,

ed, he packed up his necessaries in a portmanteau, attempted to amuse his creditors with promise of speedy payment, and venturing to come forth in the dark, took a place in the Canterbury stage-coach, after having converted his superfluities into ready-money. These steps were not taken with such privacy as to elude the vigilance of his adversaries; for although he had been cautious enough to transport himself and his baggage to the inn, on Sunday evening, and never doubted that the vehicle, which set out at four o'clock on Monday morning, would convey him out of the reach of his creditors before they could possibly obtain a writ for securing his person: they had actually taken such precautions as frustrated all his finellé; and the coach being stopped in the Borough of Southwark, Doctor Fathom was seized by virtue of a warrant obtained on a criminal indictment, and was forthwith conducted to the prison of the King's Bench; yet not before he had, by his pathetick remonstrances, excited the compassion, and even drawn tears from the eyes of his fellow-passengers.

He no sooner recollected himself from the shock which must have been occasioned by this sinister incident, than he dispatched a letter to his brother-in-law the counsellor, requesting an immediate conference, in which he promised to make such a proposal, as would save him all the expence of a law-suit and trial, and at the same time effectually answer all the purposes of both. He was accordingly favoured with a visit from the lawyer; to whom, after the most solemn protestations of his own innocence, he declared, that finding himself unable to wage war against such powerful antagonists, he had resolved even to abandon his indubitable right, and retire into another country, in order to screen himself from persecution, and remove all cause of disquiet from the prosecutrix, when he was unfortunately prevented by the warrant which had been executed against him. He said he was still willing, for the sake of his liberty, to sign a formal renunciation of his pretensions to Mrs. Fathom and her fortune, provided the deeds could be executed, and the warrant withdrawn, before he should be detained by his other creditors; and lastly, he conjured the barrister to spare himself the guilt and the charge of suborning evidence for the

destruction of an unhappy man, whose misfortune was his only fault.

The lawyer felt the force of his expostulations: and though he would by no means suppose him innocent of the charge of bigamy; yet, under the pretext of humanity and commiseration, he undertook to persuade his sister to accept of a proper release, which he observed would not be binding, if executed during the confinement of Fathom; he therefore took his leave in order to prepare the papers, withdraw the action, and take such other measures as would hinder the prisoner from giving him the slip. Next day he returned with an order to release our hero, who being formally discharged, was conducted by the lawyer to a tavern in the neighbourhood, where the releases were exchanged, and every thing concluded with amity and concord. This business being happily transacted, Fathom stepped into a hackney-coach with his baggage, and was followed by a bailiff, who told him, with great composure, that he was again a prisoner at the suit of Doctor Buffalo, and desired the coachman to re-conduct him to the lodging he had so lately discharged.

Fathom, whose fortitude had been hitherto of the Pagan temper, was now fain to reinforce it with the philosophy of Christian resignation, though he had not as yet arrived to such a pitch of self-denial as to forgive the counsellor, to whose double-dealing he imputed this new calamity. After having received the compliments of the gaoler on his recommitment, he took pen, ink, and paper, and composed an artful and affecting epistle to the empirick, imploring his mercy, flattering his weakness, and demonstrating the bad policy of cooping up an unhappy man in a gaol, where he could never have an opportunity of doing justice to his creditors; nor did he forget to declare his intention of retiring into another country, where he might have some chance of earning a subsistence, which he had so long toiled for to no purpose in England. This last declaration he made in consequence of the jealous disposition of the quack; who, he knew, had long looked upon him in the odious light of an interloping rival. However, he reaped no benefit from this supplication, which served only to gratify the pride of Buffalo, who produced the extravagant encomiums which Fathom

thom had bestowed upon him, as so many testimonials of his foe's bearing witness to his virtue.

C H A P. XXII.

FATHOM BEING SAFELY HOUSED,
THE READER IS ENTERTAINED
WITH A RETROSPECT.

BUT now it is high time to leave our adventurer to chew the cud of reflection and remorse in this solitary mansion, that we may trace Renaldo in the several steps he took to assert his right, and do justice to his family. Never man indulged a more melancholy train of ideas than that which accompanied him in his journey to the Imperial court: for, notwithstanding the manifold reasons he had to expect an happy issue to his aim, his imagination was incessantly infected with something that chilled his nerves, and saddened his heart; recurring, with quick succession, like the unwearied wave that beats upon the bleak, inhospitable Greenland-shore. This the reader will easily suppose, was no other than the remembrance of the forlorn Monimia, whose image appeared to his fancy in different attitudes, according to the prevalence of the passions which raged in his bosom. Sometimes he viewed her in the light of apostacy, and then his soul was maddened with indignation and despair: but these transitory blasts were not able to efface the impressions she had formerly made upon his heart; impressions which he had so often and so long contemplated with inconceivable rapture. These pictures still remained, representing her fair as the most perfect idea of beauty, soft and tender as an angel of mercy and compassion, warmed with every virtue of the heart, and adorned with every accomplishment of human nature; yet the alarming contrast came still in the rear of this recollection; so that his soul was by turns agitated by the tempests of horror, and overwhelmed by the floods of grief.

He recalled the moment on which he first beheld her with that pleasing regret which attends the memory of a dear deceased friend; then he bitterly cursed it, as the source of all his misfortunes and affliction: he thanked Heaven for having blessed him with a friend to detect

her perfidy and ingratitude; then ardently wished he had still continued under the influence of her delusion. In a word, the loneliness of his situation aggravated every horror of his reflection; for, as he found himself without company, his imagination was never solicited, or his attention diverted from these subjects of woe; and he travelled to Brussels in a reverie, fraught with such torments as must have entirely wrecked his reason, had not Providence interposed in his behalf. He was, by his postilion, conducted to one of the best inns of the place, where he understood the cloth was already laid for supper, and as the ordinary is open to strangers, in all these houses of entertainment, he introduced himself into the company, with a view to alleviate, in some measure, his sorrow and chagrin, by the conversation of his fellow-guests: yet he was so ill-prepared to obtain the relief which he courted, that he entered the apartment, and sat down to table, without distinguishing either the number or countenances of those who were present; though he himself did not remain so unregarded. His mien and deportment produced a prepossession in his favour; and the air of affliction so remarkable in his visage, did not fail to attract their sympathy and observation.

Among the rest, was an Irish officer in the Austrian service; who, having eyed Renaldo attentively, 'Sir,' said he, rising, 'if my eyes and memory do not deceive me, you are the Count De Melville, with whom I had the honour to serve upon the Rhine during the last war.' The youth hearing his own name mentioned, lifted up his eyes, and at once recognizing the other to be a gentleman who had been a captain in his father's regiment, ran forwards and embraced him with great affection.

This was, in divers respects, a fortunate rencounter for young Melville; as the officer was not only perfectly well acquainted with the situation of the count's family, but also resolved, in a few days, to set out for Vienna, whither he promised to accompany Renaldo, as soon as he understood his route lay the same way. Before the day fixed for their departure arrived, this gentleman found means to insinuate himself so far into the confidence of the count, as to learn the cause of that distress which he had observed in his features

at

at their first meeting; and being a gentleman of uncommon vivacity, as well as sincerely attached to the family of Melville, to which he had owed his promotion; he exerted all his good humour and good sense, in amusing the fancy, and reasoning down the mortification, of the afflicted Hungarian. He, in particular, endeavoured to wean his attention from the lost Monimia, by engaging it upon his domestick affairs, and upon the wrongs of his mother and sister; who, he gave him to understand, were languishing under the tyranny of his father-in-law.

This was a note that effectually roused him from the lethargy of his sorrow; and the desire of taking vengeance on the oppressor, who had ruined his fortune, and made his nearest relations miserable, so entirely engrossed his thoughts, as to leave no room for other considerations. During their journey to Austria, Major Farrel (that was the name of his fellow-traveller) informed him of many circumstances touching his father's house, to which himself was an utter stranger.

'The conduct of your mother,' said he, 'in marrying Count Trebasi, was not at all agreeable either to the friends of the Count De Melville, or to her own relations, who knew her second husband to be a man of a violent temper, and rapacious disposition, which the nature of his education and employment had served rather to inflame than allay; for you well know he was a partizan during the whole course of the late war. They were, moreover, equally surprized and chagrined, when they found she took no step to prevent his seizing upon that inheritance which of right belonged to you, and which, by the laws of Hungary, is unalienable from the heir of blood: nevertheless, they are now fully convinced, that she hath more than sufficiently atoned for her indiscretion, by the barbarity of her husband, who hath not only secluded her from all communication with her friends and acquaintance, but even confined her to the west tower of your father's house, where she is said to be kept close prisoner, and subjected to all sorts of inconvenience and mortification. This severity she is believed to have incurred, in consequence of having expostulated with him upon his unjust behaviour to you and Mademoiselle,

whom he hath actually shut up in some convent in Vienna; which your relations have not as yet been able to discover: but the memory of your noble father is so dear to all those who were favoured with his friendship, and the sufferings of the countess and Mademoiselle have raised such a spirit of resentment against her cruel gaoler, that nothing is wanted but your presence, to begin the prosecution, and give a sanction to the measures of your friends, which will in a little time restore your family to the fruition of its rights and fortune. For my own part, my dear count, I consider myself as one wholly indebted to your house for the rank and expectation I now enjoy; and my finances, interest, and person, such as they are, I dedicate to your service.'

Renaldo was not slow in making his acknowledgments to this generous Hibernian, whom he informed of his scheme, recounting to him his uncommon transaction with the benevolent Jew, and communicating the letters of recommendation he had received by his means, to some of the first noblemen at the Imperial court. Meanwhile he burned with impatience to chastise Count Trebasi, for his perfidious conduct to the widow and the fatherless; and would have taken the road to Presburg, without touching at Vienna, in order to call him to a severe account, had not he been strenuously opposed by Major Farrel, who represented the imprudence of taking such a step, before he had secured a proper protection from the consequences with which it might be attended.

'It is not,' said he, 'your own life and fortune only which depend upon your behaviour in this emergency, but also the quiet and happiness of those who are most dear to your affection: not you alone, but likewise your mother and sister, would infallibly suffer by your temerity and precipitation. First of all, deliver your credentials at court, and let us join our endeavours to raise an interest strong enough to counterbalance that of Trebasi. If we succeed, there will be no necessity for having recourse to personal measures: he will be compelled to yield up your inheritance which he unjustly detains, and to restore your sister to your arms; and if he afterwards refuses to do justice to the countess, you will

‘ will always have it in your power to
 ‘ evince yourself the son of the brave
 ‘ Count De Melville.’

These just and salutary representations had a due effect upon Renaldo, who no sooner arrived at the capital of Austria, than he waited upon a certain prince of distinction, to whose patronage he was commended; and from whom he met with a very cordial reception, not only on account of his credentials, but also for the sake of his father, who was well known to his highness. He heard his complaints with great patience and affability, assured him of his assistance and protection, and even undertook to introduce him to the empress queen, who would not suffer the weakest of her subjects to be oppressed, much less disregard the cause of an injured young nobleman who by his own services and those of his family was peculiarly intitled to her favour.

Nor was he the only person whose countenance and patronage Melville solicited upon this occasion; he visited all the friends of his father, and all his mother's relations, who were easily interested in his behalf; while Major Farrel contributed all his efforts in strengthening the association. So that a lawsuit was immediately commenced against Count Trebasi; who, on his side, was not idle, but prepared with incredible industry for the assault, resolving to maintain with his whole power the acquisition he had made.

The laws of Hungary, like those of some other countries I could name, afford so many subterfuges for the purposes of perfidy and fraud, that it is no wonder our youth began to complain of the slow progress of his affair; especially as he glowed with the most eager desire of redressing the grievances of his parent and sister, whose sufferings he did not doubt were doubled since the institution of his process against their tormentor. He imparted his sentiments on this head to his friend; and, as his apprehensions every moment increased, plainly told him he could no longer live without making some effort to see those with whom he was so nearly connected in point of blood and affection: he therefore resolved to repair immediately to Presburg; and, according to the intelligence he should procure, essay to see and converse with his mother, though at the hazard of his life.

CHAP. XXIII.

RENALDO ABRIDGES THE PROCEEDINGS AT LAW, AND APPROVES HIMSELF THE SON OF HIS FATHER.

THE major finding him determined, insisted upon attending him in his expedition; and they set out together for Presburg, where they privately arrived in the dark, resolving to keep themselves concealed at the house of a friend, until they should have formed some plan for their future operations. Here they were informed that Count Trebasi's castle was altogether inaccessible; that all the servants who were supposed to have the least veneration or compassion for the countess, were dismissed; and that since Renaldo was known to be in Germany, the vigilance and caution of that cruel husband were redoubled to such a degree, that nobody knew whether his unfortunate lady was actually alive or dead.

Farrel perceiving Melville exceedingly affected with this intimation, and hearing him declare that he would never quit Presburg until he should have entered the house, and removed his doubts on that interesting subject; not only argued with great vehemence against such an attempt, as equally dangerous and indiscreet, but solemnly swore he would prevent his purpose, by discovering his design to the family, unless he would promise to listen to a more moderate and feasible expedient. He then proposed that he himself should appear in the equipage of one of the travelling Savoyards who stroll about Europe, amusing ignorant people with the effects of a magick-lanthorn, and in that disguise endeavour to obtain admittance from the servants of Trebasi, among whom he might make such inquiries as would deliver Melville from his present uneasy suspense.

This proposal was embraced, though reluctantly, by Renaldo, who was unwilling to expose his friend to the least danger or disgrace; and the major being next day provided with the habit and implements of his new profession, together with a ragged attendant who preceded him, extorting musick from a poultry viol, approached the castle-gate, and proclaimed his shew so naturally,

C H A P T E R

REMARKS ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE COURT AT LAW, AND THE ATTORNEYS GENERAL, IN THE CASE OF THE PRISONER, &c.

THE first and principal question which presents itself to the mind of every person who reads the account of the trial of the prisoner, is, whether the evidence is sufficient to establish his guilt. The answer to this question is, that the evidence is not sufficient to establish his guilt. The prisoner is innocent, and the evidence is false.

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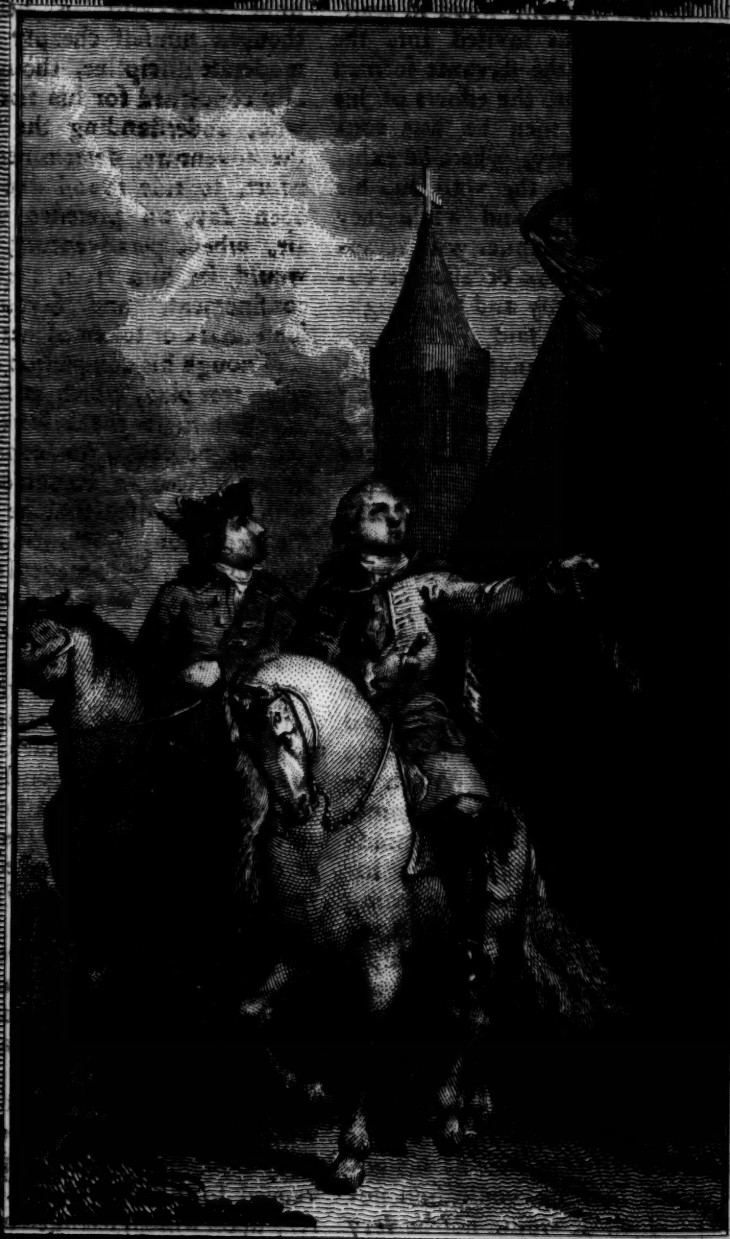
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COUNT FATHOM

Plate II

Plate II.

rally, in a yell partaking of the scream of Savoy and the howl of Ireland, that one would have imagined he had been conductor to Madam Catherina from his cradle. So far his stratagem succeeded: he had not long stood in waiting, before he was invited into the court-yard, where the servants formed a ring, and danced to the efforts of his companion's skill; then he was conducted into the buttery, where he exhibited his figures on the wall and his princess on the floor; and while they regaled him in this manner with scraps and four wine, he took occasion to enquire about the old lady and her daughter, before whom, he said, he had performed in his last peregrination. Though this question was asked with all that air of simplicity which is peculiar to these people, one of the domesticks took the alarm, being infected with the suspicions of his master, and plainly taxed the major with being a spy, threatening at the same time that he should be stripped and searched.

This would have been a very dangerous experiment for the Hibernian, who had actually in his pocket a letter to the countess from her son, which he hoped fortune might have furnished him with an opportunity to deliver. When he therefore found himself in this dilemma, he was not at all easy in his own mind: however, instead of protesting his innocence in an humble and beseeching strain, in order to acquit himself of the charge, he resolved to elude the suspicion by provoking the wrath of his accuser, and putting on the air of vulgar integrity affronted, began to reproach the servant in very insolent terms for his unfair supposition; and undressing himself in a moment to the skin, threw his tattered garments in the face of his adversary, telling him he would find nothing there which he would not be very glad to part with; at the same time, raising his voice, he, in the gibberish of the clan he represented, scolded and cursed with great fluency; so that the whole house resounded with the noise. The valet's jealousy, like a smaller fire, was in a trice swallowed up in the greater flame of his rage enkindled by this abrupt address; in consequence of which, Farrel was kicked out at the gate, naked as he was to the waist, after his lanthorn had been broke to pieces on his head; and there he was

joined by his domestick, who had not been able to recover his apparel and effect a retreat, without incurring marks of the same sort of distinction.

The major, considering the risk he must have run in being detected, thought himself cheaply quit for this moderate discipline, though he was really concerned for his friend Renaldo; who, understanding the particulars of the adventure, determined, as the last effort, to ride round the castle in the open day, on pretence of taking the air, when, peradventure, the countess would see him from the place of her confinement, and favour him with some mark or token of her being alive.

Though his companion did not much relish this plan, which he foresaw would expose him to the insults of Trebasi; yet, as he could not contrive a better, he acquiesced in Renaldo's invention, with the proviso, that he would defer the execution of it until his father-in-law should be absent in the chace, which was a diversion he every day enjoyed.

Accordingly they set a proper watch, and lay concealed until they were informed of Trebasi's having gone forth; when they mounted their horses, and rode into the neighbourhood of the castle. Having made a small excursion in the adjoining fields, they drew nearer the walls, and at an easy pace had twice circled them, when Farrel descried at the top of a tower, a white handkerchief waved by a woman's hand through the iron bars that secured the window. This signal being pointed out to Renaldo, his heart began to throb with great violence; he made a respectful obeisance towards the part in which it appeared, and perceiving the hand beckoning him to approach, advanced to the very buttress of the turret; upon which, seeing something drop, he alighted with great expedition, and took up a picture of his father in miniature, the features of which he no sooner distinguished, than the tears ran down his cheeks; he pressed the little image to his lips with the most filial fervour; then, conveying it to his bosom, looked up to the hand, which waved in such a manner, as gave him to understand it was high time to retire. Being by this time highly persuaded that his kind monitor was no other than the countess herself, he pointed to his

heart, in token of his filial affection; and, laying his hand on his sword, to denote his resolution of doing her justice, he took his leave with another profound bow, and suffered himself to be reconducted to his lodging.

Every circumstance of this transaction was observed by the servants of Count Trebasi, who immediately dispatched a messenger to their lord, with an account of what had happened. Alarmed at this information, from which he immediately concluded that the stranger was young Melville, he forthwith quitted the chace; and returning to the castle by a private postern, ordered his horse to be kept ready saddled, in hope that his son-in-law would repeat the visit to his mother. This precaution would have been to no purpose, had Renaldo followed the advice of Farrel, who represented the danger of returning to a place where the alarm was undoubtedly given by his first appearance; and exhorted him to return to Vienna for the prosecution of his suit, now that he was satisfied of his mother's being alive; in order to strengthen this admonition, he bade him recollect the signal for withdrawing, which was doubtless the effect of maternal concern, inspired by the knowledge of the count's vigilance and vindictive disposition.

Notwithstanding these suggestions, Melville persisted in his resolution of appearing once more below the tower, on the supposition that his mother, in expectation of his return, had prepared a billet for his acceptance, from which he might obtain important intelligence. The major seeing him lend a deaf ear to his remonstrances, was contented to attend him in this second expedition, which he pressed him to undertake that same afternoon, as Trebasi had taken care to circulate a report of his having gone to dine at the seat of a nobleman in the neighbourhood. Our knight-errant and his squire, deceived by this finesse, presented themselves again under the prison of the countess; who no sooner beheld her son return, than she earnestly intreated him to be gone, by the same sign which she had before used; and he taking it for granted that she was debarred the use of pen, ink, and paper, and that he had nothing more to expect, consented to retire, and had already moved to some distance from the house, when, in crossing a small plantation that belonged to the castle, they

were met by Count Trebasi and another person on horseback.

At sight of this apparition, the blood mounted into Renaldo's cheeks, and his eyes began to lighten with eagerness and indignation; which was not at all diminished by the ferocious address of the count, who, advancing to Melville with a menacing air, 'Before you proceed,' said he, 'I must know with what view you have been twice to-day patrolling round my inclosures, and reconnoitring the different avenues of my house: you likewise carry on a clandestine correspondence with some person in the family, of which my honour obliges me to demand an explanation.'

'Had your actions been always regulated by the dictates of honour,' replied Renaldo, 'I should never have been questioned for riding round that castle which you know is my rightful inheritance; or excluded from the sight of a parent who suffers under your tyranny and oppression. It is my part, therefore, to expostulate; and, since fortune hath favoured me with an opportunity of revenging our wrongs in person, we shall not part until you have learned that the family of the Count De Melville is not to be injured with impunity. Here is no advantage on either side in point of arms or number, you are better mounted than I am, and shall have the choice of the ground on which our difference ought to be brought to a speedy determination.'

Trebasi, whose courage was not of the sentimental kind, but purely owing to his natural insensibility of danger, instead of concerting measures coolly for the engagement, or making any verbal reply to this defiance, drew a pistol without the least hesitation, and fired it at the face of Renaldo, part of whose left eye-brow was carried off by the ball. Melville was not slow in returning the compliment; which, as it was deliberate, proved the more decisive: for the shot entering the count's right-breast, made it's way to the back-bone with such a shock, as struck him to the ground; upon which the other alighted, in order to improve the advantage he had gained.

During this transaction, Farrel had well-nigh lost his life by the savage behaviour of Trebasi's attendant, who had been a hussar officer, and who thinking

it was his duty to imitate the example of his patron on this occasion; discharged a pistol at the major before he had the least intimation of his design. The Hibernian's horse being a common hireling, and unaccustomed to stand fire, no sooner saw the flash of Trebasi's pistol, than starting aside, he happened to plunge into a hole, and was overturned at the very instant when the hussar's piece went off, so that no damage ensued to his rider, who pitching on his feet, flew with great nimbleness to his adversary, then laying hold on one leg, dismounted him in a twinkling, and seizing his throat as he lay, would have soon dispatched him without the use of fire-arms, had he not been prevented by his friend Renaldo, who desired him to desist, observing that his vengeance was already satisfied, as the count seemed to be in the agonies of death. The major was loth to quit his prey, as he thought his aggressor had acted in a treacherous manner; but recollecting that there was no time to lose, because, in all probability, the firing had alarmed the cattle, he took his leave of the vanquished hussar, with a couple of hearty kicks; and mounting his horse, followed Melville to the house of a gentleman in the neighbourhood, who was kinsman to the countess, and very well disposed to grant him a secure retreat, until the troublesome consequences of this rencounter should be overblown.

Trebasi, though to the young gentleman he seemed speechless and insensible, had neither lost the use of his reason, nor of his tongue, but affected that extremity, in order to avoid any farther conversation with the victor. He was one of those people who never think of death until he knocks at the door, and then earnestly intreat him to excuse them for the present, and be so good as to call another time. The count had so often escaped unhurt, in the course of his campaigns, that he looked upon himself as invulnerable, and set all danger at defiance. Though he had hitherto taken no care of the concerns of his soul, he had a large fund of superstition at bottom; and when the surgeon who examined his wound, declared it was mortal, all the terrors of futurity took hold on his imagination, and all the misdemeanors of his life

presented themselves in aggravated colours to his recollection.

He implored the spiritual assistance of a good priest in the neighbourhood; who, in the discharge of his own conscience, gave him to understand, that he had little mercy to expect, unless he would, as much as lay in his power, redress the injuries he had done to his fellow-creatures. As nothing lay heavier upon his soul than the cruelty and fraud he had practised upon the family of Count Melville, he earnestly besought this charitable clergyman to mediate his pardon with the countess, and at the same time desired to see Renaldo before his death, that he might put him in possession of his paternal estate, and solicit his forgiveness for the offence he had given.

His lady, far from waiting for the priest's intercession, no sooner understood the lamentable situation of her husband, and found herself at liberty, than she hastened to his apartment, expressed the utmost concern for his misfortune, and tended him with truly conjugal tenderness and fidelity. Her son gladly obeyed the summons, and was received with great civility and satisfaction by his father-in-law; who, in presence of the judge and divers gentlemen assembled for that purpose, renounced all right and title to the fortune he had so unjustly usurped; disclosed the name of the convent to which Mademoiselle De Melville had been conveyed; dismissed all the agents of his iniquity; and, being reconciled to his son-in-law, began to prepare himself in tranquillity for his latter end.

The countess was overwhelmed with an excess of joy, while she embraced her long-lost son, who had proved himself so worthy of his father. Yet this joy was embittered by reflecting that she was made a widow by the hands of that darling son: for, though she knew his honour demanded the sacrifice, she could not lay aside that regard and veneration which is attached to the name of husband; and therefore resolved to retire into a monastery, where she could spend the remainder of her life in devotion, without being exposed to any intercourse which might interfere with the delicacy of her sentiments on that subject.

CHAP. XXIV.

HE IS THE MESSENGER OF HAPPINESS TO HIS SISTER, WHO REMOVES THE FILM WHICH HAD LONG OBSTRUCTED HIS PENETRATION, WITH REGARD TO COUNT FATHOM.

AS the most endearing affection had always subsisted between Renaldo and his sister, he would not one moment deny himself the pleasure of flying to her embrace, and of being the glad messenger of her deliverance. Soon, therefore, as he understood the place of her retreat, and had obtained a proper order to the abbess, signed by Count Trebasi, he set out post for Vienna, still accompanied by his faithful Hibernian; and, arriving at the convent, found the abbess and the whole house so engrossed in making preparations for the ceremony of giving the veil next day to a young woman who had fulfilled the term of her probation, that he could not possibly see his sister with that leisure and satisfaction which he had flattered himself with enjoying at this meeting; and therefore he was fain to bridle his impatience for two days, and keep his credentials until the hurry should be over, that Mademoiselle might have no intimation of her good fortune, except from his own mouth.

In order to fill up this tedious interval, he visited his friends at court, who were rejoiced to hear the happy issue of his excursion to Presburg. The prince, who was his particular patron, desired he would make himself perfectly easy with regard to the death of Count Trebasi, for he would take care to represent him in such a light to the empress queen, as would screen him from any danger or prosecution on that account. His highness, moreover, appointed the following day for performing the promise he had made of presenting him to that august princess; and, in the mean time, prepossessioned her so much in his favour, that when he approached her presence, and was announced by his noble introducer, she eyed him with a look of peculiar complacency, saying, 'I am glad to see you returned to my dominions. Your father was a gallant officer, who served our house with equal courage and fidelity; and, as I understand you tread

in his footsteps, you may depend upon my favour and protection.'

He was so much overwhelmed with this gracious reception, that, while he bowed in silence, the drops of gratitude trickled from his eyes; and her Imperial majesty was so well pleased with this manifestation of his heart, that she immediately gave directions for promoting him to the command of a troop of horse. Thus fortune seemed willing, and indeed eager, to discharge the debt she owed him for the different calamities he had undergone. And, as he looked upon the generous Hebrew to be the sole source of his success, he did not fail to make him acquainted with the happy effects of his recommendation and friendship; and to express, in the warmest terms, the deep sense he had of his uncommon benevolence: which, by the bye, was still greater with regard to Renaldo, than the reader as yet imagines; for he not only furnished him with money for his present occasions, but had also given him an unlimited credit on a banker in Vienna, to whom one of his letters was directed.

The ceremony of the nun's admission being now performed, and the convent restored to its former quiet, Melville hastened thither on the wings of brotherly affection, and presented his letter to the abbess; who, having perused the contents, by which she learned that the family disquiets of Count Trebasi no longer subsisted, and that the bearer was the brother of Mademoiselle, she received him with great politeness, congratulated him on this happy event, and begging he would excuse her staying with him in the parlour, on pretence of business, withdrew, saying, she would immediately send in a young lady who would console him for her absence. In a few minutes he was joined by his sister; who, expecting nothing less than to see Renaldo, no sooner distinguished his features, than she shrieked aloud with surprise, and would have sunk upon the floor, had not he supported her in his embrace.

Such a sudden apparition of her brother, at any time, or in any place, after their long separation, would have strongly affected this sensible young lady; but to find him so abruptly in a place where she thought herself buried from the knowledge of all her relations, occasioned such commotions in her spirits, as had well-nigh endangered her reason; for it was not till after a considerable pause that

that she could talk to him with connection or coherence. However, as those transports subsided, they entered into a more deliberate and agreeable conversation; in the course of which he gradually informed her of what had passed at the castle; and inexpressible was the pleasure she felt in learning that her mother was released from captivity, herself restored to freedom, and her brother to the possession of his lawful inheritance, by the only means to which she had always prayed these blessings might be owing.

As she had been treated with uncommon humanity by the abbess, she would not consent to leave the convent until he should be ready to set out for Presburg; so that they dined together with that good lady, and passed the afternoon in that mutual communication with which a brother and sister may be supposed to entertain themselves on such an occasion. She gave him a detail of the insults and mortifications she had suffered from the brutality of her father-in-law; and told him, that her confinement in this monastery was owing to Trebasi's having intercepted a letter to her from Renaldo, signifying his intention to return to the empire, in order to assert his own right and redress her grievances. Then, turning the discourse upon the incidents of his peregrinations, she in a particular manner enquired about that exquisite beauty who had been the innocent source of all his distresses, and upon whose perfections he had often, in his letters to his sister, expatiated with indications of rapture and delight.

This enquiry in a moment blew up that scorching flame which had been well-nigh stifled by other necessary avocations. His eyes gleamed, his cheeks glowed and grew pale alternately, and his whole frame underwent an immediate agitation; which being perceived by Mademoiselle, she concluded that some new calamity was annexed to the name of Monimia, and dreading to rip up a wound which she saw was so ineffectually closed, she for the present suppressed her curiosity and concern, and industriously endeavoured to introduce some less-affecting subject of conversation. He saw her aim, approved of her discretion, and joining her endeavours, expressed his surprise at her having omitted to signify the least remembrance of her old favourite Fathom,

whom he had left in England. He had no sooner pronounced this name, than she suffered some confusion in her turn; from which, however, recollecting herself, 'Brother,' said she, 'you must endeavour to forget that wretch, who is altogether unworthy of retaining the smallest share of your regard.'

Astonished, and indeed angry at this expression, which he considered as the effect of malicious misrepresentation, he gently chid her for her credulity in believing the envious aspersions of some person who repined at the superior virtue of Fathom, whom he affirmed to be an honour to the human species.

'Nothing is more easy,' replied the young lady, 'than to impose upon a person, who, being himself unconscious of guile, suspects no deceit. You have been a dupe, dear brother, not to the finesse of Fathom, but to the sincerity of your own heart. For my own part, I assume no honour to my own penetration in having comprehended the villainy of that impostor, which was discovered in more than one instance by accidents I could not possibly foresee.'

'You must know that Teresa, who attended me from my childhood, and in whose honesty I reposed such confidence, having disobliterated some of the inferior servants, was so narrowly watched in all her transactions, as to be at last detected in the very act of conveying a piece of plate, which was actually found concealed among her cloaths.'

'You may guess how much I was astonished when I understood this circumstance; I could not trust to the evidence of my own senses, and should have still believed her innocent, in spite of ocular demonstration, had not she, in the terrors of being tried for felony, promised to make a very material discovery to the countess, provided she would take such measures as would save her life.'

This request being complied with, she, in my hearing, opened up such an amazing scene of iniquity, baseness, and ingratitude, which had been acted by her and Fathom, in order to defraud the family to which they were so much indebted, that I could not have believed the human mind capable of such degeneracy, or that traitor endowed with such pernicious cunning.

ning and dissimulation, had not her tale been congruous, consistent, and distinct, and fraught with circumstances that left no room to doubt the least article of her confession: on consideration of which, she was permitted to go into voluntary exile.

She then explained their combination in all the particulars, as we have already recounted them in their proper place; and finally observed, that the opinion she had hence conceived of Fathom's character, was confirmed by what she had since learned of his perfidious conduct towards that very nun who had lately taken the veil.

Perceiving her brother struck dumb with astonishment, and gaping with the most eager attention, she proceeded to relate the incidents of his double intrigue with the jeweller's wife and daughter, as they were communicated to her by the nun, who was no other than the individual Wilhelmina. After those rivals had been forsaken by their gallant, their mutual animosities and chagrin served to whet the attention and invention of each; so that in a little time the whole mystery stood disclosed to both. The mother had discovered the daughter's correspondence with Fathom, as we have formerly observed, by means of that unfortunate letter which he unwittingly committed to the charge of the old beldame; and as soon as she understood he was without the reach of all solicitation or prosecution, imparted this billet to her husband, whose fury was so ungovernable, that he had almost sacrificed Wilhelmina with his own hands, especially when, terrified by his threats and imprecations, she owned that she had bestowed the chain on this perfidious lover. However, his dreadful purpose was prevented, partly by the interposition of his wife, whose aim was not the death but immurement of his daughter, and partly by the tears and supplication of the young gentlewoman herself, who protested that, although the ceremony of the church had not been performed, she was contracted to Fathom by the most solemn vows, to witness which he invoked all the saints in Heaven.

The jeweller, upon cooler consideration, was unwilling to lose the least spark of hope that glittered among the ruins of his despair, and resisted all the importunities of his wife, who pressed

him to consult the welfare of his daughter's soul, in the fond expectation of finding some expedient to lure back the chain and its possessor. In the meantime, Wilhelmina was daily and hourly exposed to the mortifying animadversions of her mamma; who, with all the insolence of virtue, incessantly upbraided her with the backslidings of her vicious life, and exhorted her to reformation and repentance. This continual triumph lasted for many months, till at length a quarrel happened between the mother and the gossip, at whose house she used to give the rendezvous to her admirers, that incensed confidante, in the precipitation of her anger, promulgated the history of those secret meetings, and, among the rest, her interviews with Fathom were brought to light.

The first people who hear news of this sort, are generally those to whom they are most unwelcome. The German was soon apprized of his wife's frailty, and considered the two females of his house as a couple of devils incarnate, sent from hell to exercise his patience; yet, in the midst of his displeasure, he found matter of consolation in being furnished with a sufficient reason for parting with his help-mate, who had for many years kept his family in disquiet. He therefore, without hazarding a personal conference, sent proposals to her by a friend, which she did not think proper to reject: and seeing himself restored to the dominion of his own house, exerted his sway so tyrannically, that Wilhelmina became weary of her life, and had recourse to the comforts of religion, of which she soon became enamoured, and begged her father's permission to dedicate the rest of her life to the duties of devotion. She was accordingly received in this convent; the regulations of which were so much to her liking, that she performed the task of probation with pleasure, and voluntarily excluded herself from the vanities of this life. It was here she had contracted an acquaintance with Mademoiselle De Melville, to whom she communicated her complaints of Fathom, on the supposition that he was related to the count, as he himself had often declared.

While the young lady rehearsed the particulars of this detail, Renaldo sustained a strange vicissitude of different passions, Surprise, sorrow, fear, hope, and

and indignation, raised a most tumultuous conflict in his bosom. Monimia rushed upon his imagination in the character of innocence betrayed by the insinuations of treachery. He with horror viewed her at the mercy of a villain, who had broken all the ties of gratitude and honour.

Affrighted at the prospect, he started from his seat, exclaiming in the unconnected strain of distraction and despair: 'Have I then nourished a serpent in my bosom! Have I listened to the voice of a traitor who hath murdered my peace! who hath tore my heart-strings asunder, and perhaps ruined the pattern of all earthly perfection! It cannot be. Heaven would not suffer such infernal artifice to take effect. The thunder would be levelled against the head of the accursed projector.'

From this transport, compared with his agitation when she mentioned Monimia, his sister judged that Fathom had been the occasion of a breach between the two lovers; and this conjecture being confirmed by the disjointed answers he made to her interrogations upon the affair, she endeavoured to calm his apprehensions, by representing that he would soon have an opportunity of returning to England, where the misunderstanding might be easily cleared up; and that, in the mean time, he had nothing to fear on account of the person of his mistress, in a country where individuals were so well protected by the laws and constitution of the realm. At length he suffered himself to be flattered with the fond hope of seeing Monimia's character triumph in the inquiry; of retrieving that lost jewel, and of renewing that ravishing intercourse and exalted expectation which had been so cruelly cut off. He now wished to find Fathom as black as he had been exhibited, that Monimia's apostacy might be numbered among the misrepresentations of his treachery and fraud.

His love, which was alike generous and ardent, espoused the cause, and he no longer doubted her constancy and virtue; but when he reflected how her tender heart must have been wrung with anguish at his unkindness and cruelty, in leaving her destitute in a foreign land; how her sensibility must have been tortured in finding herself altogether dependant upon a ruffian, who certainly harboured the most baleful de-

signs upon her honour; how her life must be endangered both by his barbarity and her own despair: I say, when he reflected on these circumstances, he shuddered with horror and dismay; and that very night dispatched a letter to his friend the Jew, intreating him, in the most pressing manner, to employ all his intelligence in learning the situation of the fair orphan, that she might be protected from the villainy of Fathom, until his return to England.

CHAP. XXV.

HE RECOMPENSES THE ATTACHMENT OF HIS FRIEND; AND RECEIVES A LETTER THAT REDUCES HIM TO THE VERGE OF DEATH AND DISTRACTION.

THIS step being taken, his mind in some measure retrieved its former tranquillity; he soothed himself with the prospect of an happy reconciliation with the divine Monimia, and his fancy was decoyed from every disagreeable preface by the entertaining conversation of his sister, with whom in two days he set out for Presburg, attended by his friend the major, who had never quitted him since their meeting at Brussels. Here they found Count Trebasi entirely rid of the fever which had been occasioned by his wound, and in a fair way of doing well; a circumstance that afforded unspeakable pleasure to Melville, whose manner of thinking was such as would have made him unhappy, could he have charged himself with the death of his mother's husband, howsoever criminal he might have been.

The count's ferocity did not return with his health; his eyes were opened by the danger he had incurred, and his sentiments turned in a new channel; he heartily asked pardon of Mademoiselle for the rigorous usage she had suffered from the violence of his temper; thanked Renaldo for the seasonable lesson he had administered to him; and not only insisted upon being removed from the castle to an house of his own in Presburg, but proffered to make immediate restitution of all the rents which he had unjustly converted to his own use.

These things being settled in the most amicable manner, to the entire satis-

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faction of the parties concerned, as well as of the neighbouring noblesse, among whom the house of Melville was in universal esteem, Renaldo resolved to solicit leave at the Imperial court to return to England, in order to investigate that affair of Monimia, which was more interesting than all the points he had hitherto adjusted; but, before he quitted Presburg, his friend Farrel taking him aside one day, 'Count,' said he, 'will you give me leave to ask, if, by my zeal and attachment for you, I have had the good fortune to acquire your esteem?'—'To doubt that esteem,' replied Renaldo, 'were to suspect my gratitude and honour, of which I must be utterly destitute before I lose the sense of those obligations I owe to your gallantry and friendship; obligations which I long for a proper occasion to repay.'

'Well, then,' resumed the major, 'I will deal with you like a downright Swiss, and point out a method by which you may shift the load of obligation from your own shoulders to mine. You know my birth, rank, and expectations in the service; but perhaps you do not know, that as my expence has always unavoidably exceeded my income, I find myself a little out at elbows in my circumstances, and want to piece them up by matrimony. Of those ladies with whom I think I have any chance of succeeding, Mademoiselle De Melville seems the best qualified to render my situation happy in all respects. Her fortune is more than sufficient to disembarass my affairs; her good sense will be a seasonable check upon my vivacity; her agreeable accomplishments will engage a continuation of affection and regard: I know my own disposition well enough to think I shall become a most dutiful and tractable husband; and shall deem myself highly honoured in being more closely united to my dear Count De Melville, the son and representative of that worthy officer under whom my youth was formed; if you will therefore sanction my claim, I will forthwith begin my approaches, and doubt not, under your auspices, to bring the place to a capitulation.'

Renaldo was pleased with the frankness of this declaration, approved of his demand, and desired him to depend

upon his good offices with his sister, whom he sounded that same evening upon the subject, recommending the major to her favour, as a gentleman well worthy of her choice. Mademoiselle, who had never been exercised in the coquetties of her sex, and was now arrived at those years, when the vanity of youth ought to yield to discretion, considered the proposal as a philosopher; and, after due deliberation, candidly owned she had no objection to the match. Farrel was accordingly introduced in the character of a lover, after the permission of the countess had been obtained; and he carried on his addresses in the usual form, so much to the satisfaction of all concerned in the event, that a day was appointed for the celebration of his nuptials, when he entered into peaceable possession of his prize.

A few days after this joyful occasion, while Renaldo was at Vienna, where he had been indulged with leave of absence for six months, and employed in making preparations for his journey to Britain, he was one evening presented by his servant with a packet from London, which he no sooner opened, than he found inclosed a letter directed to him, in the hand-writing of Monimia. He was so much affected at sight of those well-known characters, that he stood motionless as a statue, eager to know the contents, yet afraid to peruse the billet. While he hesitated in this suspense, he chanced to cast his eye on the inside of the cover, and perceived the name of his Jewish friend at the bottom of a few lines, importing, that the inclosed was delivered to him by a physician of his acquaintance, who had recommended it in a particular manner to his care. This intimation served only to increase the mystery, and whet his impatience; and as he had the explanation in his hand, he summoned all his resolution to his aid, and breaking the seal, began to read these words: 'Renaldo will not suppose, that this address proceeds from interested motives, when he learns, that, before it can be presented to his view, the unfortunate Monimia will be no more.'

Here the light forsook Renaldo's eyes, his knees knocked together, and he fell at full length insensible on the floor. His valet hearing the noise, ran into the apartment, lifted him upon a couch, and

and dispatched a messenger for proper assistance, while he himself endeavoured to recal his spirits by such applications as chance afforded; but before the count exhibited any signs of life, his brother-in-law entered his chamber by accident; and, as soon as he recollected himself from the extreme confusion and concern produced by this melancholy spectacle, he perceived the fatal epistle which Melville, though insensible, still kept within his grasp; justly suspecting this to be the cause of that severe paroxysm, he drew near the couch, and with difficulty read what is above rehearsed, and the sequel to this effect.

'Yes, I have taken such measures as will prevent it from falling into your hands, until after I shall have been released from a being imbibed with inexpressible misery and anguish. It is not my intention, once loved, and ah! still too fondly remembered youth, to upbraid you as the source of that unceasing woe, which hath been so long the sole inhabitant of my lonely bosom. I will not call you inconsistent or unkind. I dare not think you base or dishonourable; yet I was abruptly sacrificed to a triumphant rival, before I had learned to bear such mortification; before I had overcome the prejudices which I had imbibed in my father's house. I was all at once abandoned to despair, to indigence and distress, to the vile practices of a villain, who, I fear, hath betrayed us both. What have not I suffered from the insults and vicious designs of that wretch, whom you cherished in your bosom! yet to these I owe this near approach to that goal of peace, where the canker-worm of sorrow will expire. Beware of that artful traitor; and, oh! endeavour to overcome that levity of disposition, which, if indulged, will not only stain your reputation, but also debase the good qualities of your heart. I release you, in the sight of Heaven, from all obligations: if I have been injured, let not my wrongs be visited on the head of Renaldo, for whom shall be offered up the last fervent prayers of hapless Monimia.'

This letter was a clue to the labyrinth of Melville's distress: though the major had never heard him mention the

name of this beauty, he had received such hints from his own wife, as enabled him to comprehend the whole of the count's disaster. By the administration of stimulating medicines, Renaldo recovered his perception; but this was a cruel alternative, considering the situation of his thoughts. The first word he pronounced was Monimia, with all the emphasis of the most violent despair; he perused the letter, and poured forth incoherent execrations against Fathom and himself. He exclaimed in a frantick tone, 'She is lost for ever! murdered by my unkindness! we are both undone by the infernal arts of Fathom! Execrable monster! restore her to my arms. If thou art not a fiend in reality, I will tear out thy false heart!'

So saying, he sprung upon his valet; who would have fallen a sacrifice to his undistinguishing fury, had not he been saved by the interposition of Farrel and the family, who disengaged him from his master's gripe by dint of force; yet, notwithstanding their joint endeavours, he broke from this restraint, leaped upon the floor, and seizing his sword, attempted to plunge it in his own breast. When he was once more overcome by numbers, he cursed himself, and all those who withheld him; swore he would not survive the fair victim who had perished by his credulity and indiscretion; and the agitation of his spirits increased to such a degree, that he was seized with strong convulsions, which nature was scarce able to sustain; every medical expedient was used to quiet this perturbation, which at length yielded so far as to subside into a continual fever and confirmed delirium, during which he ceased not to pour forth the most pathetic complaints touching his ruined love, and to rave about the ill-starred Monimia. The major, half distracted by the calamity of his friend, would have concealed it from the knowledge of his family, had not the physician, by despairing of his life, laid him under the necessity of making them acquainted with his condition.

The countess and Mrs. Farrel were no sooner informed of his case, than they hastened to the melancholy scene, where they found Renaldo deprived of his senses, panting under the rage of an exasperated disease. They saw his face distorted, and his eyes glaring with

frenzy; they heard him invoke the name of Monimia, with a tenderness of accent, which even the impulse of madness could not destroy. Then, with a sudden transition of tone and gesture, he denounced vengeance against her betrayer, and called upon the north wind to cool the fervour of his brain. His hair hung in dishevelled parcels, his cheeks were wan, his looks ghastly, his vigour was fled, and all the glory of his youth faded; the physician hung his head in silence, the attendants wrung their hands in despair, and the countenance of his friend was bathed in tears.

Such a picture would have moved the most obdurate heart: what impression then must it have made upon a parent and sister, melting with all the enthusiasm of affection! The mother was struck dumb, and stupified with grief; the sister threw herself on the bed in a transport of sorrow, caught her loved Renaldo in her arms, and was with great difficulty tore from his embrace. Such was the dismal reverse that overtook the late so happy family of Melville; such was the extremity to which the treachery of Fathom had reduced his best benefactor!

Three days did nature struggle with surprizing efforts, and then the constitution seemed to sink under the victorious fever; yet, as his strength diminished, his delirium abated, and on the fifth morning he looked round, and recognized his weeping friends. Though now exhausted to the lowest ebb of life, he retained the perfect use of speech, and his reason being quite unclouded, spoke to each with equal kindness and composure; he congratulated himself upon the sight of shore, after the horrors of such a tempest; called upon the countess and his sister, who were not permitted to see him at such a conjuncture, and being apprized by the major of his reason for excluding them from his presence, he applauded his concern, bequeathed them to his future care, and took leave of that gentleman with a cordial embrace. Then he desired to be left in private with a certain clergyman, who regulated the concerns of his soul; and he being dismissed, turned his face from the light, in expectation of his final discharge: in a few minutes all was still and dreary; he was no longer heard to breathe, no more the stream of life was perceived to

circulate; he was supposed to be absolved from all his cares, and an universal groan from the by-standers announced the decease of the gallant, generous, and tender-hearted Renaldo.

'Come hither ye whom the pride of youth and health, of birth and affluence inflames; who tread the flowery maze of pleasure, trusting to the fruition of ever-circling joys: ye who glory in your accomplishments, who indulge the views of ambition, and lay schemes for future happiness and grandeur; contemplate here the vanity of life; behold how low this excellent young man is laid! mowed down even in the blossom of his youth, when fortune seemed to open all her treasures to his worth!'

Such were the reflections of the generous Farrel; who, while he performed the last office of friendship, in closing the eyes of the much-lamented Melville, perceived a warmth on the skin, which the hand of death seldom leaves unextinguished: this uncommon sensation he reported to the physician; who, though he could feel no pulsation in the heart or arteries, conjectured that life still lingered in some of its interior haunts, and immediately ordered such applications to the extremities and surface of the body, as might help to concentrate and reinforce the natural heat.

By these prescriptions, which, for some time, produced no sensible effect, the embers were, in all probability, kept glowing, and the vital power revived; for, after a considerable pause, respiration was gradually renewed at long intervals, a languid motion was perceived at the heart, a few feeble and irregular pulsations were felt at the wrist; the clay-coloured livery of death began to vanish from his face; the circulation acquired new force, and he opened his eyes with a sigh, which proclaimed his return from the shades of death.

When he recovered the faculty of swallowing, a cordial was administered; and whether the fever abated, in consequence of the blood's being cooled and condensed during the recess of action in the solids, or nature in that agony had prepared a proper channel for the expulsion of the disease; certain it is, he was from this moment rid of all bodily pain; he retrieved the animal functions, and nothing remained of his malady but an extreme weakness and languor, the effect

fect of nature's being fatigued in the battle she had won.

Unutterable was the joy that took possession of his mother and sister, when Farrel flew into their apartment, to intimate this happy turn. Scarce could they be restrained from pouring forth their transports in the presence of Renaldo, who was still too feeble to endure such communication: indeed, he was extremely mortified and dejected at this event, which had diffused such pleasure and satisfaction among his friends; for, though his distemper was mastered, the fatal cause of it still rankled at his heart, and he considered this respite from death as a protraction of his misery.

When he was congratulated by the major on the triumph of his constitution, he replied, with a groan, 'I would to Heaven it had been otherwise; for I am reserved for all the horrors of the most poignant sorrow and remorse.—O Monimia! Monimia! I hoped, by this time, to have convinced thy gentle shade, that I was at least intentionally innocent of that ruthless barbarity which hath brought thee to an untimely grave. Heaven and earth! do I still survive the consciousness of that dire catastrophe! and lives the atrocious villain who hath blasted all our hopes!'

With these last words, the fire darted from his eyes, and his brother, snatching this occasional handle for reconciling him to life, joined in his exclamations against the treacherous Fathom; and observed, that he should not, in point of honour, wish to die, until he should have sacrificed that traitor to the manes of the beautiful Monimia. This incitement acted as a spur upon exhausted nature, causing the blood to circulate with fresh vigour, and encouraging him to take such sustenance as would recruit his strength, and repair the damage which his health had sustained.

His sister assiduously attended him in his recovery, flattering his appetite, and amusing his sorrow at the same time; the clergyman assailed his despondence with religious weapons, as well as with arguments drawn from philosophy; and the fury of his passions being already expended, he became so tractable as to listen to his remonstrances; but, notwithstanding the joint endeavours of all his friends, a deep-fixed melancholy re-

mained, after every consequence of his disease had vanished; in vain they essayed to elude his grief by gaiety and diversions; in vain they tried to decoy his heart into some new engagement.

These kind attempts served only to feed and nourish that melancholy which pined within his bosom. Monimia still haunted him in the midst of these amusements, while his reflection whispered to him, 'Pleasures like these I might have relished with her participation.' That darling idea mingled in all the female assemblies at which he was present, eclipsing their attractions, and enhancing the bitterness of his loss; for absence, enthusiasm, and even his despair, had heightened the charms of the fair orphan into something supernatural and divine.

Time, that commonly weakens the traces of remembrance, seemed to deepen it's impressions in his breast: nightly, in his dreams, did he converse with his dear Monimia; sometimes on the verdant bank of a delightful stream, where he breathed, in soft murmurs, the dictates of his love and admiration; sometimes reclined within the tufted grove, his arm encircled and sustained her snowy neck; whilst she, with looks of love ineffable, gazed on his face, invoking Heaven to bless her husband and lord. Yet even in these illusions was his fancy oft alarmed for the ill-fated fair; sometimes he viewed her tottering on the brink of a steep precipice, far distant from his helping hand; at other times she seemed to sail along the boisterous tide, imploring his assistance: then would he start with horror from his sleep, and feel his sorrows more than realized; he deserted his couch; he avoided the society of mankind; he courted sequestered shades, where he could indulge his melancholy; there his mind brooded over his calamity, until his imagination became familiar with all the ravages of death; it contemplated the gradual decline of Monimia's health; her tears, her distress, her despair, at his imagined cruelty! he saw through that perspective every blossom of her beauty wither, every sparkle vanish from her eyes; he beheld her faded lips, her pale cheek, and her inanimated features, the symmetry of which not death itself was able to destroy. His fancy conveyed her breathless corpse to the cold grave; over which, perhaps, no tear humane was

was shed; where her delicate limbs were consigned to dust; where she was dished out a delicious banquet to the unsparing worm.

Over these pictures he dwelt with a sort of pleasing anguish, until he became so enamoured of her tomb, that he could no longer resist the desire which compelled him to make a pilgrimage to the dear hallowed spot, where all his once-gay hopes lay buried; that he might nightly visit the silent habitation of his ruined love, embrace the sacred earth with which she was now compounded, moisten it with his tears, and bid the turf lie easy on her breast. Besides the prospect of this gloomy enjoyment, he was urged to return to England, by an eager desire of taking vengeance on the perfidious Fathom, as well as of acquitting himself of the obligations he owed in that kingdom, to those who had assisted him in his distress. He therefore communicated his intention to Farrel, who would have insisted upon attending him in the journey, had not he been conjured to stay and manage Renaldo's affairs in his absence. Every previous step being taken, he took leave of the countess and his sister; who had, with all their interest and elocution, opposed his design, the execution of which, they justly feared, would, instead of dissipating, augment his chagrin; and now seeing him determined, they shed a flood of tears at his departure, and he set out from Vienna in a post-chaise, accompanied by a trusty valet de chambre on horseback.

CHAP. XXVI.

RENALDO MEETS WITH A LIVING MONUMENT OF JUSTICE, AND ENCOUNTERS A PERSONAGE OF SOME NOTE IN THESE MEMOIRS.

AS this domestick was very well qualified for making all the proper dispositions, and adjusting every necessary article on the road, Renaldo totally abstracted himself from earthly considerations, and mused without ceasing on that theme which was the constant subject of his contemplation. He was blind to the objects that surrounded him; he scarce ever felt the importunities of nature; and had not they been reinforced by the pressing entreaties of his attendant, he would have proceeded without

refreshment or repose. In this absence of mind did he traverse a great part of Germany, in his way to the Austrian Netherlands, and arrived at the fortress of Luxemburg, where he was obliged to tarry a whole day on account of an accident which had happened to his chaise. Here he went to view the fortifications; and, as he walked along the ramparts, his ears were saluted with these words, 'Heaven bless the noble Count De Melville! will not he turn the eyes of compassion upon an old fellow-foldier, reduced to misfortune and disgrace?'

Surprized at this address, which was attended with the clanking of chains, Renaldo lifted up his eyes, and perceived the person who spoke to be one of two malefactors shackled together, who had been sentenced for some crime to work as labourers on the fortifications: his face was so covered with hair, and his whole appearance so disguised by the squalid habit which he wore, that the count could not recollect his features, until he gave him to understand that his name was Ratchkali. Melville immediately recognized his fellow-student at Vienna and his brother-volunteer upon the Rhine, and expressed equal surprise and concern at seeing him in such a deplorable situation.

Nothing renders the soul so callous and insensible as the searing bands of infamy and disgrace. Without betraying the least symptoms of shame and confusion, 'Count,' says he, 'this is the fate of war; at least, of the war in which I have been engaged, ever since I took leave of the Imperial army, and retreated with your old companion Fathom. Long life to that original genius! If he is not unhappily eclipsed by some unfortunate interposition, before his terrene parts are purified, I foresee that he will shine a star of the first magnitude in the world of adventure.'

At mention of this detested name, Renaldo's heart began to throb with indignation; yet he suppressed the emotion, and desired to know the meaning of that splendid encomium which he had bestowed upon his confederate. 'It would be quite unnecessary,' replied Ratchkali, 'for a man in my present situation to equivocate or disguise the truth: the nature of my disgrace is perfectly well known. I am condemned'

demned to hard labour for life; and unless some lucky accident (which I cannot now foresee) shall intervene, all I can expect, is some alleviation of my hard lot from the generosity of such gentlemen as you, who compassionate the sufferings of your fellow-creatures. In order to engage this benevolence the more in my behalf, I shall, if you will give me the hearing, faithfully inform you of some particulars, which it may import you to know concerning my old acquaintance Ferdinand Count Fathom, whose real character hath perhaps hitherto escaped your notice.'

Then he proceeded to give a regular detail of all the strokes of finesse which he, in conjunction with our adventurer, had practised upon Melville and others, during their residence at Vienna, and the campaigns they had made upon the Rhine: he explained the nature of the robbery which was supposed to have been done by the count's valet, together with the manner of their desertion; he described his separation from Fathom, their meeting at London, the traffick they carried on in copartnership, and the misfortune that reduced Ferdinand to the condition in which he was found by Melville.

'After having gratified the honest lawyer,' said he, 'with a share of the unfortunate Fathom's spoils, and packed up all my own valuable effects, my new auxiliary Maurice and I posted to Harwich, embarked in the packet-boat, and next day arrived at Helveotfluys; from thence we repaired to the Hague, in order to mingle in the gaieties of the place, and exercise our talents at play, which is there cultivated with universal eagerness: but, chancing to meet with an old acquaintance, whom I did not at all desire to see, I found it convenient to withdraw softly to Rotterdam; from whence we set out for Antwerp; and having made a tour of the Austrian Netherlands, set up our rest at Brussels, and concerted a plan for laying the Flemings under contribution.'

'From our appearance, we procured admission into the most polite assemblies, and succeeded to a wonder in all our operations; until our career was unfortunately checked by the indiscretion of my ally, who, being detected in the very act of conveying a card, was immediately introduced to

a magistrate; and this minister of justice was so curious, inquisitive, and clear-sighted, that Count Maurice, finding it impossible to elude his penetration, was fain to stipulate for his own safety, by giving up his friend to the cognizance of the law. I was accordingly apprehended, before I knew the cause of my arrest; and being unhappily known by some soldiers of the prince's guard, my character turned out so little to the approbation of the inquisitors, that all my effects were confiscated for the benefit of the state; and I was, by a formal sentence, condemned to labour on the fortifications all the days of my life; while Maurice escaped at the expence of five hundred stripes, which he received in publick from the hands of the common executioner.'

'Thus have I, without evasion or mental reservation, given a faithful account of the steps by which I have arrived at this barrier, which is likely to be the *ne plus ultra* of my peregrinations, unless the generous count De Melville will deign to interpose his interest in behalf of an old fellow-soldier, who may yet live to justify his meditation.'

Renaldo had no reason to doubt the truth of this story, every circumstance of which tended to corroborate the intelligence he had already received touching the character of Fathom, whom he now considered with a double portion of abhorrence, as the most abandoned miscreant that nature had ever produced. Though Ratchkali did not possess a much higher place in his opinion, he favoured him with marks of his bounty, and exhorted him, if possible, to reform his heart; but he would by no means promise to interpose his credit in favour of a wretch self-convicted of such enormous villainy and fraud. He could not help moralizing upon this rencounter, which inspired him with great contempt for human nature: and next day he proceeded on his journey with a heavy heart, ruminating on the perfidy of mankind, and, between whiles, transported with the prospect of revenging all his calamities upon the accursed author.

While he was wrapped up in these reveries, his carriage rolled along, and had already entered a wood between Mons and Tournay, when his dream was suddenly interrupted by the explosion

sion of several pistols that were fired among the thickets at a little distance from the road. Rouzed at this alarm, he snatched his sword that stood by him; and, springing from the chaise, ran directly towards the spot, being close followed by his valet, who had alighted and armed himself with a pistol in each hand. About forty yards from the highway, they arrived in a little glade or opening, where they saw a single man standing at bay against five banditti, after having killed one of their companions, and lost his own horse, that lay dead upon the ground.

Melville seeing this odds, and immediately guessing their design, rushed among them without hesitation, and in an instant ran his sword through the heart of one whose hand was raised to smite the gentleman behind, while he was engaged with the rest in front. At the same time the valet disabled another by a shot in the shoulder; so that the number being now equal on both sides, a furious combat ensued, every man being paired with an antagonist, and each having recourse to swords, as all their pieces had been discharged. Renaldo's adversary finding himself pressed with equal fury and skill, retreated gradually among the trees, until he vanished altogether into the thickest of the wood; and his two companions followed his example with great ease, the valet de chambre being hurt in the leg, and the stranger so much exhausted by the wounds he had received before Renaldo's interposition, that when the young gentleman approached to congratulate him on the defeat of the robbers, he, in advancing to embrace his deliverer, dropt down motionless on the grass.

The count, with that warmth of sympathy and benevolence which was natural to his heart, lifted up the wounded cavalier in his arms, and carried him to the chaise, in which he was deposited, while the valet de chambre reloaded his pistols, and prepared for a second attack, as they did not doubt that the banditti would return with a reinforcement. However, before they re-appeared, Renaldo's driver disengaged him from the wood, and in less than a quarter of an hour they arrived at a village, where they halted for assistance to the stranger, who, though still alive, had not recovered the use of his senses.

After he was undressed and laid in a

warm bed, a surgeon examined his body, and found a wound in his neck by a sword, and another in his right-side occasioned by a pistol-shot; so that his prognostick was very dubious: meanwhile, he applied proper dressings to both; and, in half an hour after this administration, the gentleman gave some tokens of perception. He looked around him with a wildness of fury in his aspect, as if he had thought himself in the hands of the robbers by whom he had been attacked; but, when he saw the assiduity with which the bystanders exerted themselves in his behalf, one raising his head from the pillow, while another exhorted him to swallow a little wine which was warmed for the purpose; when he beheld the sympathizing looks of all present, and heard himself accosted in the most cordial terms by the person whom he recollected as his deliverer; all the severity vanished from his countenance; he took Renaldo's hand and pressed it to his lips; and while the tears gushed from his eyes, 'Praised be God,' said he, 'that virtue and generosity are still to be found among the sons of men!'

Every body in the apartment was affected by this exclamation; and Melville, above all the rest, felt such emotions as he could scarcely restrain. He intreated the gentleman to believe himself in the midst of such friends as would effectually secure him from all violence and mortification; he conjured him to compose the perturbation of his spirits, and quiet the apprehensions of his mind with that reflection; and protested, that he himself would not quit the house while his attendance should be deemed necessary for the stranger's cure, or his conversation conducive to his amusement.

These assurances, considered with the heroic part which the young Hungarian had already acted in his behalf, inspired the cavalier with such a sublime idea of Melville, that he gazed upon him with silent astonishment, as an angel sent from heaven for his succour; and, in the transport of his gratitude, could not help exclaiming, 'Sure Providence hath still something in reserve for this unfortunate wretch, in whose favour such a miracle of courage and generosity hath interposed!'

Being accommodated with proper care and attendance, his constitution, in a little

little time, overcame the fever; and at the third dressing, the surgeon declared him out of all danger from his wounds. Then was Renaldo indulged with opportunities of conversing with the patient, and of inquiring into the particulars of his fortune and designs in life, with a view to manifest the inclinations he felt to serve him in his future occasions.

The more this stranger contemplated the character of the count, the more his amazement increased, on account of his extraordinary benevolence in favour of a person whose merit he could not possibly know; he even expressed his surprise on this subject to Renaldo, who at length told him, that, although his best offices should always be ready for the occasions of any gentleman in distress, his particular attachment and regard to him was improved by an additional consideration: 'I am no stranger,' said he, 'to the virtues and honour of the gallant Don Diego De Zelos.'

'Heaven and earth!' cried the stranger, starting from his seat with extreme emotion, 'do I then live to hear myself addressed by that long-lost appellation! My heart glows at the expression! My spirits are kindled with a flame that thrills through every nerve! Say, young gentleman, if you are really an inhabitant of earth, by what means are you acquainted with the unhappy name of Zelos?'

In answer to this eager interrogation, Renaldo gave him to understand, that in the course of his travels, he had resided a short time at Seville, where he had frequently seen Don Diego, and often heard his character mentioned with uncommon esteem and veneration. 'Alas!' replied the Castilian, 'that justice is no longer done to the wretched Zelos; his honours are blasted, and his reputation canker-bitten by the venomous tooth of slander.'

He then proceeded to unfold his misfortunes, as they have already been explained in the first volume of these Memoirs; at the recapitulation of which, the heart of Melville being intendered by his own calamities, was so deeply affected, that he re-echoed the groans of Don Diego, and wept over his sufferings with the most filial sympathy. When he repeated the story of that cruel fraud, which was practised upon him by the faithless Fadini, Melville, whose

mind and imagination teemed with the villainies of Fathom, was immediately struck with the conjecture of his being the knave; because, indeed, he could not believe that any other person was so abandoned by principle and humanity, as to take such a barbarous advantage of a gentleman in distress.

C H A P. XXVII.

HIS RETURN TO ENGLAND, AND MIDNIGHT PILGRIMAGE TO MO- NIMIA'S TOMB.

HE considered the date of that unparalleled transaction, which agreed with his conjecture; and, from the inquiries he made concerning the person of the traitor, gathered reasons sufficient to confirm his supposition. Thus certified, 'That is the villain,' cried the count, 'whose infernal arts have overwhelmed me with such misery as Heaven itself hath no remedy to dispel! To revenge my wrongs on that perfidious miscreant, is one of the chief reasons for which I deign to drag about an hateful being. O Don Diego! what is life, when all its enjoyments are so easily poisoned by the machinations of such a worm!' So saying, he smote his breast in all the agony of woe, and besought the Spaniard to relate the steps he took in consequence of this disaster.

The Castilian's cheeks reddened at this information, which reinforced his own resentment; and, casting up his eyes to Heaven, 'Sacred powers!' cried he, 'let him not perish, before you bring him within my reach!—You ask me, noble cavalier, what measures I took in this abyss of misery. For the first day, I was tortured with apprehensions for the friendly Fadini, fearing that he had been robbed and murdered for the jewels which he had, perhaps, too unwarily exposed to sale: but this terror soon vanished before the true presages of my fate; when, on the morrow, I found the whole family in tears and confusion, and heard my landlord pour forth the most bitter imprecations against the fugitive who had despoiled his daughter, and even robbed the house. You will ask, which of the passions of my heart were interested on this occasion; they

‘ were shame and indignation: all my
‘ grief flowed in another channel; I
‘ blushed to find my judgment deceived.
‘ I scorned to complain; but in my
‘ heart denounced vengeance against my
‘ base betrayer. I silently retired to my
‘ apartment, in order to commune with
‘ my own thoughts.

‘ I had bore greater calamities, with-
‘ out being driven to despair: I sum-
‘ moned all my fortitude to my assist-
‘ ance, and resolved to live in spite of
‘ affliction. Thus determined, I betook
‘ myself to the house of a general officer,
‘ whose character was fair in the world;
‘ and having obtained admission in con-
‘ sequence of my oriental appearance;
‘ “To a man of honour,” said I, “the
‘ unfortunate need no introduction: my
‘ habit proclaims me a Persian; this
‘ passport from the States of Holland
‘ will confirm that supposition. I have
‘ been robbed of jewels, to a conside-
‘ rable value, by a wretch whom I fa-
‘ voured with my confidence; and now,
‘ reduced to extreme indigence, I come
‘ to offer myself as a soldier in the ar-
‘ mies of France. I have health and
‘ strength sufficient to discharge that
‘ duty: nor am I unacquainted with a
‘ military life, which was once my glo-
‘ ry and occupation. I therefore sue
‘ for your protection, that I may be
‘ received, though in the lowest order
‘ of them that serve the king; and that
‘ your future favour may depend upon
‘ my behaviour in that capacity.”

‘ The general, surprized at my decla-
‘ ration, surveyed me with uncommon
‘ attention; he perused my certificate,
‘ asked divers questions concerning the
‘ art of war; to which I returned such
‘ answers as convinced him that I was
‘ not wholly ignorant in that particu-
‘ lar. In short, I was enlisted as a vo-
‘ lunteer in his own regiment, and soon
‘ after promoted to the rank of a su-
‘ baltern, and the office of equerry to
‘ his own son; who, at that time, had
‘ attained to the degree of colonel,
‘ though his age did not exceed eighteen
‘ years.

‘ This young man was naturally of
‘ a ferocious disposition, which had been
‘ rendered quite untractable by the pride
‘ of birth and fortune, together with
‘ the licence of his education. As he
‘ did not know the respect due to a
‘ gentleman, so he could not possibly
‘ pay it to those who were unfortunately

‘ under his command. Divers morti-
‘ fications I sustained with that forti-
‘ tude which became a Castilian, who
‘ lay under obligations to the father;
‘ till at length, laying aside all deco-
‘ rum, he smote me. Sacred Heaven!
‘ he smote Don Diego De Zelos, in pre-
‘ sence of his whole household.

‘ Had my sword been endowed with
‘ sensation, it would of itself have start-
‘ ed from the scabbard, at this indig-
‘ nity offered to it’s master. I unsheath-
‘ ed it without deliberation, saying,
‘ “Know, insolent boy, he is a gentle-
‘ man whom thou hast thus outraged;
‘ and thou hast cancelled the ties which
‘ have hitherto restrained my indigna-
‘ tion.” His servants would have in-
‘ terposed, but he commanded them to
‘ retire; and, flushed with that confi-
‘ dence which the impetuosity of his
‘ temper inspired, he drew in his turn,
‘ and attacked me with redoubled rage;
‘ but his dexterity being very unequal
‘ to his courage, he was soon disarmed
‘ and overthrown; when pointing my
‘ sword to his breast, “In considera-
‘ tion of thy youth and ignorance,”
‘ said I, “I spare that life which thou
‘ hast forfeited by thy ungenerous pre-
‘ sumption.”

‘ With these words I put up my
‘ weapon, retired through the midst of
‘ his domesticks; who, seeing their ma-
‘ ster safe, did not think proper to op-
‘ pose my passage; and mounting my
‘ horse, in less than two hours entered
‘ the Austrian dominions, resolving to
‘ proceed as far as Holland, that I
‘ might embark in the first ship for
‘ Spain, in order to wash away, with
‘ my own blood, or that of my ene-
‘ mies, the cruel stain which had so
‘ long defiled my reputation.

‘ This was the grievance that still cor-
‘ roded my heart, and rendered inef-
‘ fectual the inhuman sacrifice I had
‘ made to my injured honour. This
‘ was the consideration that incessantly
‘ prompted, and still importunes me, to
‘ run every risk of life and fortune, ra-
‘ ther than leave my fame under such
‘ an ignominious aspersions. I purpose
‘ to obey this internal call. I am apt
‘ to believe it is the voice of Heaven;
‘ of that Providence which manifested
‘ it’s care by sending such a generous
‘ auxiliary to my aid, when I was over-
‘ powered by banditti, on the very first
‘ day of my expedition.’

Having

Having in this manner gratified the curiosity of his deliverer, he expressed a desire of knowing the quality of him to whom he was so signally obliged; and Renaldo did not scruple to make the Castilian acquainted with his name and family: he likewise communicated the story of his unfortunate love, with all the symptoms of unutterable woe, which drew tears from the noble-hearted Spaniard, while with a groan that announced the load which overwhelmed his soul, 'I had a daughter,' said he, 'such as you describe the peerless Monimia; had Heaven decreed her for the arms of such a lover, I, whom am now the most wretched, should have been the most happy parent upon earth.'

Thus did these new friends alternately indulge their mutual sorrow, and concert measures for their future operations. Melville earnestly solicited the Castilian to favour him with his company to England, where, in all probability, both would enjoy the gloomy satisfaction of being revenged upon their common betrayer Fathom; and, as a farther inducement, he assured him, that as soon as he should have accomplished the melancholy purposes of his voyage, he would accompany Don Diego to Spain, and employ his whole interest and fortune in his service. The Spaniard, thunder-struck at the extravagant generosity of this proposal, could scarce believe the evidence of his own senses, and after some pause, replied, 'My duty would teach me to obey any command you should think proper to impose; but here my inclination and interest are so agreeably flattered, that I should be equally ungrateful and unwise, in pretending to comply with reluctance.'

This point being settled, they moved forwards to Mons, as soon as Don Diego was in a condition to bear the shock of such a removal; and there remaining until his wounds were perfectly cured, they hired a post-chaise for Ostend, embarked in a vessel at that port, reached the opposite shore of England, after a short and easy passage, and arrived in London without having met with any sinister accident on the road.

As they approached this capital, Renaldo's grief seemed to regurgitate with redoubled violence. His memory was waked to the most minute and painful exertion of its faculties; his imagination teemed with the most afflicting ima-

ges, and his impatience became so ardent, that never lover panted more eagerly for the consummation of his wishes, than Melville for an opportunity of stretching himself upon the grave of the lost Monimia. The Castilian was astonished as well as affected at the poignancy of his grief, which, as a proof of his susceptibility and virtue, endeared him still more to his affection; and though his own misfortunes had rendered him very unfit for the office of a comforter, he endeavoured, by soothing discourse, to moderate the excess of his friend's affliction.

Though it was dark when they alighted at the inn, Melville ordered a coach to be called; and being attended by the Spaniard, who would not be persuaded to quit him upon such an occasion, he repaired to the house of the generous Jew, whose rheum distilled very plentifully at his approach. The count had already acquitted himself in point of pecuniary obligations to this benevolent Hebrew; and now, after having made such acknowledgments as might be expected from a youth of his disposition, he begged to know by what channel he had received that letter which he had been so kind as to forward to Vienna.

Joshua, who was ignorant of the contents of that epistle, and saw the young gentleman extremely moved, would have eluded his enquiry, by pretending he had forgot the circumstance; but when he understood the nature of the case, which was not explained without the manifestation of the utmost inquietude, he heartily consoled the desponding lover, telling him he had in vain employed all his intelligence about that unfortunate beauty, in consequence of Melville's letter to him on that subject; and then directed him to the house of that physician, who had brought the fatal billet which had made him miserable.

No sooner did he receive this information than he took his leave abruptly, with promise of returning next day, and hied him to the lodgings of that gentleman, whom he was lucky enough to find at home. Being favoured with a private audience, 'When I tell you,' said he, 'that my name is Renaldo Count De Melville, you will know me to be the most unfortunate of men. By that letter, which you committed to the charge of my worthy friend Joshua,

the fatal veil was removed from my eyes, which had been so long darkened by the artifices of incredible deceit, and my own incurable misery fully presented to my view. If you were acquainted with the unhappy fair, who hath fallen a victim to my mistake, you will have some idea of the insufferable pangs which I now feel in recollecting her fate. If you have compassion for these pangs, you will not refuse to conduct me to the spot where the dear remains of Monimia are deposited; there let me enjoy a full banquet of woe; there let me feast that worm of sorrow that preys upon my heart: for such entertainment have I revisited this (to me) ill-omened isle; for this satisfaction I intrude upon your condescension at these unseasonable hours; for to such a degree of impatience is my affliction whetted, that no slumber shall assail mine eyelids, no peace reside within my bosom, until I shall have adored that earthly shrine where my Monimia lies! Yet would I know the circumstances of her fate. Did Heaven ordain no angel to minister to her distress? Were her last moments comfortless? Ha! was not she abandoned to indigence, to insults; left in the power of that inhuman villain who betrayed us both! Sacred Heaven! why did Providence wink at the triumph of such consummate perfidy?

The physician having listened with complacency to this effusion, replied, 'It is my profession, it is my nature to sympathize with the afflicted. I am a judge of your feelings, because I know the value of your loss. I attended the incomparable Monimia in her last illness, and am well enough acquainted with her story, to conclude, that she fell a sacrifice to an unhappy misunderstanding, effected and fomented by that traitor who abused your mutual confidence.'

He then proceeded to inform him of all the particulars which we have already recorded, touching the destiny of the beautiful orphan, and concluded with telling him he was ready to yield him any other satisfaction which it was in his power to grant. The circumstances of the tale had put Renaldo's spirits into such commotion, that he could utter nothing but interjections and unconnected words. When Fathom's behaviour was

described, he trembled with fierce agitation, started from his chair, pronouncing, 'Monster! fiend! But we shall one day meet.'

When he was made acquainted with the benevolence of the French lady, he exclaimed, 'O heaven-born charity and compassion! Sure that must be some spirit of grace, sent hither to mitigate the tortures of life! Where shall I find her, to offer up my thanks and adoration?' Having heard the conclusion of the detail, he embraced the relater, as the kind benefactor of Monimia, shed a flood of tears in his bosom, and pressed him to crown the obligation, by conducting him to the solitary place where now she rested from all her cares.

The gentleman, perceiving the transports of his grief were such as could not be opposed, complied with his request, attended him in the vehicle, and directed the coachman to drive to a sequestered field, at some distance from the city, where stood the church, within whose awful isle this scene was to be acted. The sexton being summoned from his bed, produced the keys, in consequence of a gratification, after the physician had communed with him apart, and explained the intention of Renaldo's visit.

During this pause, the soul of Melville was wound up to the highest pitch of enthusiastick sorrow. The uncommon darkness of the night, the solemn silence, and lonely situation of the place, conspired with the occasion of his coming, and the dismal images of his fancy, to produce a real rapture of gloomy expectation, which the whole world would not have persuaded him to disappoint. The clock struck twelve, the owl screeched from the ruined battlement, the door was opened by the sexton; who, by the light of a glimmering taper, conducted the despairing lover to a dreary aisle, and stamped upon the ground with his foot, saying, 'Here the young lady lies interred.'

Melville no sooner received this intimation, than falling on his knees, and pressing his lips to the hallowed earth: 'Peace,' cried he, 'to the gentle tenant of this silent habitation.' Then turning to the by-standers, with blood-shot eye, said, 'Leave me to the full enjoyment of this occasion: my grief is too delicate to admit the company even

‘ even of my friends; the rites to be performed require privacy; adieu then, here must I pass the night alone.’

The doctor, alarmed at this declaration, which he was afraid imported some resolution fatal to his own life, began to repent of having been accessory to the visit, attempted to dissuade him from his purpose, and finding him obstinately determined, called in the assistance of the sexton and coachman, and solicited the aid of Don Diego, to force Renaldo from the execution of his design.

The Castilian, knowing his friend was then very unfit for common altercation, interposed in the dispute, saying, ‘ You need not be afraid that he will obey the dictates of despair; his religion, his honour will baffle such temptations; he hath promised to reserve his life for the occasions of his friend; and he shall not be disappointed in his present aim.’ In order to corroborate this peremptory address, which was delivered in the French language, he unsheathed his sword, and the others retreating at sight of his weapon, ‘ Count,’ said he, ‘ enjoy your grief in full transport: I will screen you from interruption, though at the hazard of my life; and while you give a loose to sorrow, within that ghastly vault, I will watch till morning in the porch, and meditate upon the ruin of my own family and peace.’

He accordingly prevailed upon the physician to retire, after he had satisfied the sexton, and ordered the coachman to return by break of day.

Renaldo thus left alone, prostrated himself upon the grave, and poured forth such lamentations as would have drawn tears from the most savage hearer. He called aloud upon Monimia’s name. ‘ Are these the nuptial joys to which our fate hath doomed us? Is this the fruit of those endearing hopes, that intercourse divine, that raptured admiration, in which so many hours insensibly elapsed! Where, now, are those attractions, to which I yielded up my captive heart? Quenched are those genial eyes that gladdened each beholder, and shone the planets of my happiness and peace! Cold! cold and withered are those lips that swelled with love, and far out-blushed the damask rose! and ah! for ever silenced is that tongue, whose eloquence

‘ had power to lull the pangs of misery and care! no more shall my attention be ravished with the musick of that voice, which used to thrill in soft vibrations to my soul! O fainted spirit! O unspotted shade of her whom I adored; of her whose memory I shall still revere with ever-bleeding sorrow and regret; of her whose image will be the last idea that forsakes this hapless bosom! Now art thou conscious of my integrity and love; now dost thou behold the anguish that I feel. If the pure essence of thy nature will permit, wilt thou, ah! wilt thou indulge this wretched youth with some kind signal of thy notice, with some token of thy approbation? wilt thou assume a medium of embodied air, in semblance of that lovely form, which now lies mouldering in this dreary tomb, and speak the words of peace to my distempered soul! Return, Monimia! appear, though but for one short moment, to my longing eyes! vouchsafe one smile; Renaldo will be satisfied; Renaldo’s heart will be at rest; his grief no more will overflow its banks, but glide with equal current to his latest hour. Alas! these are the raving of my delirious sorrow! Monimia hears not my complaints; her soul sublimed far, far above all sublunary cares, enjoys that felicity, of which she was debarred on earth. In vain I stretch these eyes, environed with darkness, undistinguishing and void: no object meets my view; no sound salutes mine ear, except the noisy wind that whistles through these vaulted caves of death.’

In this kind of exclamation did Renaldo pass the night, not without a certain species of woeful enjoyment, which the soul is often able to conjure up from the depths of distress; inasmuch, that when the morning intruded on his privacy, he could scarce believe it was the light of day, so fast had fled the minutes of his devotion.

His heart being thus disburdened, and his impatience gratified, he became so calm and composed, that Don Diego was equally pleased and astonished at the air of serenity with which he came forth, and embraced him with warm acknowledgments of his goodness and attachment; he frankly owned, that his mind was now more at ease than he had ever found it, since he first received the fatal

fatal intimation of his loss; that a few such feasts would entirely moderate the keen appetite of his sorrow, which he would afterwards feed with less precipitation.

He also imparted to the Castilian, the plan of a monument, which he had designed for the incomparable Monimia; and Don Diego was so much struck with the description, that he solicited his advice in projecting another, of a different nature, to be erected to the memory of his own ill-fated wife and daughter, should he ever be able to re-establish himself in Spain.

C H A P. XXVIII.

HE RENEWS THE RITES OF SORROW, AND IS ENTRANCED.

WHILE they amused themselves with this sort of conversation, the physician returned with the coach, and accompanied them back to their inn, where he left them to their repose, after having promised to call again at noon, and conduct Renaldo to the house of Madam Clement, the benefactress of Monimia, to whom he eagerly desired to be introduced.

The appointment was observed with all imaginable punctuality on both sides. Melville had arrayed himself in a suit of deep mourning, and he found the good lady in the like habit, assumed upon the same occasion: the goodness of her heart was manifest in her countenance; the sensibility of the youth discovered itself in a flood of tears, which he shed at her appearance. His sensations were too full for utterance; nor was she, for some time, able to give him welcome: while she led him by the hand to a seat, the drops of sympathy rushed into either eye; and at length she broke silence, saying, 'Count, we must acquiesce in the dispensations of Providence; and quiet the transports of our grief, with a full assurance that Monimia is happy.'

This name was the key that unlocked the faculty of his speech. 'I must strive,' said he, 'to ease the anguish of my heart with that consolation. But say, humane, benevolent lady, to whose compassion and generosity that hapless orphan was indebted for the last peaceful moment

'she enjoyed upon earth; say, in all your acquaintance with human nature, in all your intercourse with the daughters of men, in all the exercise of your charity and beneficence, did you ever observe such sweetness, purity, and truth; such beauty, sense, and perfection, as that which was the inheritance of her whose fate I shall for ever deplore?'—'She was, indeed,' replied the lady, 'the best and fairest of our sex.'

This was the beginning of a conversation touching that lovely victim, in the course of which, he explained those wicked arts which Fathom practised to alienate his affections from the adorable Monimia; and she described the cunning hints and false insinuations by which that traitor had aspersed the unsuspecting lover, and soiled his character in the opinion of the virtuous orphan. The intelligence he obtained on this occasion, added indignation to his grief; the whole mystery of Monimia's behaviour, which he could not before explain, now stood disclosed before him; he saw the gradual progress of that infernal plan, which had been laid for their mutual ruin; and his soul was inflamed with such desire of vengeance, that he would have taken his leave abruptly, in order to set on foot an immediate enquiry about the perfidious author of his wrongs, that he might exterminate such a monster of iniquity from the face of the earth; but he was restrained by Madam Clement, who gave him to understand, that Fathom was already overtaken by the vengeance of Heaven; for she had traced him in all the course of his fortune, from his first appearance in the medical sphere to his total eclipse. She represented the villain as a wretch altogether unworthy of his attention; she said he was covered with infamy, that no person could enter the lists against him, without bearing away some stain of dishonour; that he was, at present, peculiarly protected by the law, and sheltered from the resentment of Renaldo, in the cavern of his disgrace.

Melville, glowing with rage, replied, that he was a venomous serpent, which it was incumbent on every foot to crush; that it was the duty of every man to contribute his whole power in freeing society from such a pernicious hypocrite; and that if such instances of perfidy and

and ingratitude were suffered to pass with impunity, virtue and plain-dealing would soon be expelled from the habitations of men. 'Over and above these motives,' said he, 'I own myself so vitiated with the allay of human passion and infirmity, that I desire, I eagerly pant for an occasion of meeting him hand to hand, where I may upbraid him with his treachery, and shower down vengeance and destruction on his perfidious head.'

Then he recounted the anecdotes of our adventurer, which he had learned in Germany and Flanders, and concluded with declaring his unalterable resolution of releasing him from gaol, that he might have an opportunity of sacrificing him with his own hand to the manes of Monimia. The discreet lady, perceiving the perturbation of his mind, would not farther combat the impetuosity of his passion; contenting herself with exacting a promise, that he would not execute his purpose, until he should have deliberated three days upon the consequences by which a step of that kind might be attended; before the expiration of that term, she thought measures might be taken to prevent the young gentleman from exposing his life or reputation to unnecessary hazard.

Having complied with her request in this particular, he took his leave; after he had, by repeated entreaties, prevailed upon her to accept a jewel, in token of his veneration for the kind benefactress of his deceased Monimia: nor could his generous heart be satisfied, until he had forced a considerable present on the humane physician, who had attended her in her last moments, and now discovered a particular sympathy and concern for her desponding lover. This gentleman attended him to the house of the benevolent Joshua, where they dined, and where Don Diego was recommended, in the most fervid terms of friendship, to the good offices of their host. Not that this duty was performed in presence of the stranger, Renaldo's delicacy would not expose his friend to such a situation; while the physician, before dinner, entertained that stranger in one apartment, Melville withdrew into another, with the Jew, to whom he disclosed the affair of the Castilian, with certain circumstances, which shall, in due time, be revealed.

Joshua's curiosity being whetted by

this information, he could not help eyeing the Spaniard at table, with such a particular stare, that Don Diego perceived his attention, and took umbrage at the freedom of his regard. Being unable to conceal his displeasure, he addressed himself to the Hebrew, with great solemnity in the Spanish tongue, saying, 'Signior, is there any singularity in my appearance? or, do you recollect the features of Don Diego De Zelos?'

'Signior Don Diego,' replied the other in pure Castilian, 'I crave your pardon for the rudeness of my curiosity, which prompted me to survey a nobleman, whose character I revere, and to whose misfortunes I am no stranger; indeed, were curiosity alone concerned, I should be without excuse, but as I am heartily inclined to serve you, as far as my weak abilities extend, I hope your generosity will not impute any little involuntary trespass of punctilio to my want of cordiality or esteem.'

The Spaniard was not only appeased by this apology, but also affected with the compliment, and the language in which it was conveyed. He thanked the Jew for his kind declaration, intreated him to bear with the peevishness of a disposition, sore with the galling hand of affliction; and, turning up his eyes to Heaven, 'Were it possible,' cried he, 'for fate to reconcile contradictions, and recal the irremediable current of events, I would now believe, that there was happiness still in reserve for the forlorn Zelos; now that I tread the land of freedom and humanity; now that I find myself befriended by the most generous of men. Alas! I ask not happiness! if, by the kind endeavours of the gallant Count De Melville, to whom I am already indebted for my life; and by the efforts of his friends, the honour of my name shall be purified and cleared from the poisonous stains of malice, by which it is at present spotted; I shall then enjoy all that satisfaction, which destiny can bestow upon a wretch whose woes are incurable.'

Renaldo comforted him with the assurance of his being on the eve of triumphing over his adversaries; and Joshua confirmed the consolation, by giving him to understand, that he had correspondents in Spain, of some influence in the state; that he had already written

to them on the subject of Don Diego, in consequence of a letter which he had received from Melville, while he tarried at Mons, and that he, every post, expected a favourable answer on that subject.

After dinner, the physician took his leave, though not before he had promised to meet Renaldo at night, and accompany him in the repetition of his midnight visit to Monimia's tomb; for this pilgrimage the unfortunate youth resolved nightly to perform, during the whole time of his residence in England; it was, indeed, a sort of pleasure, the prospect of which enabled him to bear the toil of living through the day; though his patience was almost quite exhausted before the hour of assignation arrived.

When the doctor appeared with the coach, he leaped into it with great eagerness, after he had, with much difficulty, prevailed with Don Diego to stay at home, on account of his health, which was not yet perfectly established. The Castilian, however, would not comply with his request, until he had obtained the count's promise, that he should be permitted to accompany him next night, and take that duty alternately with the physician.

About midnight they reached the place, where they found the sexton in waiting, according to the orders he had received; the door was opened, the mourner conducted to the tomb, and left as before to the gloom of his own meditations. Again he laid himself on the cold ground; again he renewed his lamentable strain; his imagination began to be heated into an ecstasy of enthusiasm, during which, he again fervently invoked the spirit of his deceased Monimia.

In the midst of these invocations, his ear was suddenly invaded with the sound of some few solemn notes, issuing from the organ, which seemed to feel the impulse of an invisible hand.

At this awful salutation, Melville was roused to the keenest sense of surprise and attention: reason shrunk before the thronging ideas of his fancy, which represented this music as the prelude to something strange and supernatural; and, while he waited for the sequel, the place was suddenly illuminated, and each surrounding object brought under the cognizance of his eye.

What passed within his mind on this occasion, is not easy to be described: all his faculties were swallowed up by those of seeing and of hearing; he had mechanically raised himself upon one knee, with his body advancing forwards; and in this attitude he gazed with a look, through which his soul seemed eager to escape. To his view, thus strained upon vacant space, in a few minutes appeared the figure of a woman arrayed in white, with a veil that covered her face, and flowed down upon her back and shoulders. The phantom approached him with an easy step, and, lifting up her veil, discovered (believe it, O reader!) the individual countenance of Monimia.

At sight of these well-known features, seemingly improved with new celestial graces, the youth became a statue, expressing amazement, love, and awful adoration. He saw the apparition smile with meek benevolence, divine compassion, warmed and intendered by that fond, pure flame, which death could not extinguish: he heard the voice of his Monimia call Renaldo! Thrice he essayed to answer; as oft his tongue denied it's office: his hair stood upright, and a cold vapour seemed to thrill through every nerve. This was not fear, but the infirmity of human nature, oppressed by the presence of a superior being.

At length his agony was overcome; he recollected all his resolution, and in a strain of awe-struck rapture, thus addressed the heavenly visitant. 'Hast thou then heard, pure spirit, the wailings of my grief? Hast thou descended from the realms of bliss, in pity to my woe? and art thou come to speak the words of peace to my desponding soul? To bid the wretched smile; to lift the load of misery and care from the afflicted breast; to fill thy lover's heart with joy and pleasing hope, was still the darling task of my Monimia; ere yet refined to that perfection which mortality can never attain: no wonder, then, blest shade, that now, when reunited to thy native heaven, thou art still kind, propitious, and beneficent, to us, who groan in this inhospitable vale of sorrow thou hast left; tell me, ah! tell me, dost thou still remember those fond hours we passed together? Doth that enlightened bosom feel a pang of soft regret, when thou recallest our fa-

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COUNT FATHOM.



'tal separation? Sure that meekened glance bespeaks thy sympathy! Ah! how that tender look overpowers me! Sacred Heaven! the pearly drops of pity trickle down thy cheeks! Such are the tears that angels shed over man's distress! Turn not away: thou beckonest me to follow; yes, I will follow thee, æthereal spirit, as far as these weak limbs, encumbered with mortality, will bear my weight; and would to Heaven I could, with ease, put off these vile, corporeal shackles, and attend thy flight!

So saying, he started from the ground, and in a transport of eager expectation, at awful distance, traced the footsteps of the apparition; which, entering a detached apartment, sunk down upon a chair, and with a sigh exclaimed, 'Indeed, this is too much!' What was the disorder of Renaldo's mind, when he perceived this phenomenon! Before reflection could perform it's office, moved by a sudden impulse, he sprung forwards, crying, 'If it be death to touch thee, let me die!' and caught in his arms, not the shadow, but the warm substance of the all-accomplished Monimia. 'Mysterious powers of Providence! this is no phantom! this is no shade! this is the life, the panting bosom of her whom I have so long, so bitterly deplored! I fold her in my arms! I press her glowing breast to mine! I see her blush with virtuous pleasure and ingenuous love! she smiles upon me with enchanting tenderness! O let me gaze on that transcendent beauty, which the more I view it, ravishes the more! These charms are too intense; I sicken while I gaze! Merciful Heaven! is not this a mere illusion of the brain? Was she not fled for ever? Had not the cold hand of death divorced her from my hope? This must be some flattering vision of my disordered fancy! perhaps some soothing dream: if such it be, grant, O ye heavenly powers! that I may never wake.'

'O gentle youth!' replied the beauteous orphan, still clasped in his embrace, 'what joy now fills the bosom of Monimia, at this triumph of thy virtue and thy love? When I see these transports of thy affection, when I find thee restored to that place in my esteem and admiration, which thou hadst lost by the arts of calumny and malice!

'This is a meeting which my most sanguine hopes durst not presage!'

So entirely were the faculties of Renaldo engrossed in the contemplation of his restored Monimia, that he saw not the rest of the company, who wept with transport over this affecting scene: he was therefore amazed at the interposition of Madam Clement; who, while the shower of sympathetick pleasure bedewed her cheeks, congratulated the lovers upon this happy event, crying, 'These are the joys which virtue calls her own.' They also received the compliments of a reverend clergyman; who told Monimia, she had reaped at last the fruits of that pious resignation to the will of Heaven, which she had so devoutly practised during the term of her affliction: and, lastly, they were accosted by the physician, who was not quite so hackneyed in the ways of death, or so callous to the finer sensations of the soul, but that he blubbered plentifully, while he petitioned Heaven in behalf of such an accomplished and deserving pair.

Monimia, taking Madam Clement by the hand, 'Whatever joy,' said she, 'Renaldo derives from this occasion, is owing to the bounty, the compassion, and maternal care of this incomparable lady, together with the kind admonitions and humanity of these two worthy gentlemen.'

Melville, whose passions were still in agitation, and whose mind could not yet digest the incidents that occurred, embraced them all by turns; but, like the faithful needle, which, though shaken for an instant from it's poize, immediately regains it's true direction, and points invariably to the pole, he soon returned to his Monimia; again he held her in his arms; again he drank enchantment from her eyes, and thus poured forth the effusions of his soul: 'Can I then trust the evidence of sense? And art thou really to my wish restored? Never, O never, did thy beauty shine with such bewitching grace, as that which now confounds and captivates my view! sure there is something more than mortal in thy looks! Where hast thou lived? Where bordered this perfection? Whence art thou now descended? Oh! I am all amazement, joy, and fear! Thou wilt not leave me! no, we must not part again: by this warm kiss, a thousand

'times more sweet than all the fragrance
'of the East, we never more will part!
'O this is rapture, extasy, and what no
'language can explain!'

In the midst of these ejaculations, he ravished a banquet from her glowing lips, that kindled in his heart a flame, which rushed through every vein, and glided to his marrow: this was a privilege he had never claimed before, and now permitted as a recompence for all the penance he had suffered; nevertheless, the cheeks of Monimia, who was altogether unaccustomed to such familiarities, underwent a total suffusion; and Madam Clement discreetly relieved her from the anxiety of her situation, by interfering in the discourse, and rallying the count, upon his endeavours to monopolize such a branch of happiness.

'O my dear lady!' replied Renaldo, who by this time had, in some measure, recovered his recollection, 'forgive the wild transports of a fond lover, who hath so unexpectedly retrieved the jewel of his soul! yet, far from wishing to hoard up his treasure, he means to communicate and diffuse his happiness to all his friends.—O my Monimia! how will the pleasure of this hour be propagated! As yet thou knowest not all the bliss that is reserved for thy enjoyment: meanwhile, I long to learn by what contrivance this happy interview hath been effected; still am I ignorant how I was transported into this apartment, from the lonely vault in which I mourned over my supposed misfortune!'

C H A P. XXIX.

THE MYSTERY UNFOLDED. ANOTHER RECOGNITION; WHICH, IT IS TO BE HOPED, THE READER COULD NOT FORESEE.

THE French lady then explained the whole mystery of Monimia's death, as a stratagem she had concerted with the clergyman and doctor, in order to defeat the pernicious designs of Fathom, who seemed determined to support his false pretensions, by dint of perjury and fraud, which they would have found it very difficult to elude. She observed, that the physician had actually despaired of Monimia's life, and it was not till after she herself was

made acquainted with the prognostick, that she wrote the letter to Renaldo, which she committed to the care of Madam Clement, with an earnest intreaty, that it should not be sent till after her decease: but that lady believing the count had been certainly abused by his treacherous confidant, dispatched the billet without the knowledge of Monimia, whose health was restored by the indefatigable care of the physician, and the sage exhortations of the clergyman, by which she was reconciled to life. In a word, the villainy of Fathom had inspired her with some faint hope that Renaldo might still be innocent; and that notion contributed not a little to her cure.

The letter having so effectually answered their warmest hopes, in bringing back Renaldo such a pattern of constancy and love; the confederates, in consequence of his enthusiastick sorrow, had planned this meeting as the most interesting way of restoring two virtuous lovers to the arms of each other; for which purpose the good clergyman had pitched upon his own church, and indulged them with the use of the vestry, in which they now were presented with a small but elegant collation.

Melville heard this succinct detail with equal joy and admiration; he poured forth the dictates of his gratitude to the preservers of his happiness: 'This church,' said he, 'shall henceforth possess a double share of my veneration; this holy man will, I hope, finish the charitable work he has begun, by tying those bands of our happiness, which nought but death shall have power to unbind.' Then turning to that object which was the star of his regard, 'Do I not over-rate,' said he, 'my interest with the fair Monimia?' She made no verbal reply; but answered by an emphatick glance, more eloquent than all the powers of rhetoric and speech. This language, which is universal in the world of love, he perfectly well understood; and in token of that faculty, sealed the assent which she had smiled, with a kiss imprinted on her polished forehead.

In order to dissipate those interesting ideas, which, by being too long indulged, might have endangered his reason, Madam Clement intreated him to entertain the company with a detail of what had happened to him in his last journey

journey to the empire; and Monimia expressed a desire of knowing, in particular, the issue of his contest with Count Trebasi, who, she knew, had usurped the succession of his father.

Thus solicited, he could not refuse to gratify their curiosity and concern: he explained his obligations to the benevolent Jew; related the steps he had taken at Vienna for the recovery of his inheritance; informed them of his happy rencounter with his father-in-law; of his sister's deliverance and marriage; of the danger into which his life had been precipitated by the news of Monimia's death; and, lastly, of his adventure with the banditti, in favour of a gentleman, who he afterwards understood had been robbed in the most base and barbarous manner by Fathom. He likewise, to the astonishment of all present, and of his mistress in particular, communicated some circumstances, which shall appear in due season.

Monimia's tender frame being quite fatigued with the scene she had acted, and her mind overwhelmed with the prosperous tidings she had heard, after having joined the congratulations of the company, on the good fortune of her Renaldo, begged leave to retire, that she might by repose recruit her exhausted spirits; and the night being pretty far spent, she was conducted by her lover to Madam Clement's coach, that stood in waiting, in which also the rest of the company made shift to embark, and were carried to the house of that good lady; where, after they were invited to dine, and Melville intreated to bring Don Diego and the Jew along with them, they took leave of one another, and retired to their respective lodgings in a transport of joy and satisfaction.

As for Renaldo, his rapture was still mixed with apprehension, that all he had seen and heard was no more than an unsubstantial vision, raised by some gay delirium of a disordered imagination. While his breast underwent those violent, though blissful emotions of joy and admiration, his friend the Castilian spent the night in ruminating over his own calamities, and in a serious and severe review of his own conduct. He compared his own behaviour with that of the young Hungarian, and found himself so light in the scale, that he smote his breast with violence, exclaiming in an agony of remorse.

Count Melville has reason to grieve, Don Diego to despair; his misfortunes flow from the villainy of mankind, mine are the fruit of my own madness: he laments the loss of a mistress, who fell a sacrifice to the perfidious arts of a crafty traitor; she was beautiful, virtuous, accomplished, and affectionate; he was fraught with sensibility and love. Doubtless, his heart must have deeply suffered; his behaviour denotes the keenness of his woe; his eyes are ever flowing fountains of tears; his bosom the habitation of sighs; five hundred leagues hath he measured in a pilgrimage to her tomb; nightly he visits the dreary vault where she now lies at rest; her solitary grave is his couch; he converses with darkness and the dead, until each lonely aisle re-echoes his distress. What would be his penance, had he my cause? were he conscious of having murdered a beloved wife and darling daughter! Ah, wretch! ah, cruel homicide! what had those dear victims done to merit such a fate? Were they not ever gentle and obedient, ever aiming to give thee satisfaction and delight! Say, that Serafina was enamoured of a peasant; say, that she had degenerated from the honour of her race: the inclinations are involuntary; perhaps that stranger was her equal in pedigree and worth. Had they been fairly questioned, they might have justified, at least excused, that conduct which appeared so criminal; or had they owned the offence, and supplicated pardon: Oh, barbarous monster that I am! was all the husband, was all the father extinguished in my heart? How shall my own errors be forgiven, if I refuse to pardon the frailties of my own blood; of those who are most dear to my affection! Yet nature pleaded strongly in their behalf! my heart was bursting while I dismissed them to the shades of death. I was maddened with revenge! I was guided by that savage principle which falsely we call honour; accursed phantom! that assumes the specious title, and misleads our wretched nation! Is it then honourable to skulk like an assassin, and plunge the secret dagger in the heart of some unhappy man, who hath incurred my groundless jealousy or suspicion, without indulging him with that opportunity which the worst

' criminal enjoys? or is it honourable
' to poison two defenceless women, a
' tender wife, an amiable daughter,
' whom even a frown would almost have
' destroyed! Oh, this is cowardice,
' brutality, hell-born fury and revenge!
' Heaven hath not mercy to forgive such
' execrable guilt. Who gave thee power,
' abandoned ruffian, over the lives of
' those whom God hath stationed as thy
' fellows of probation; over those whom
' he had sent to comfort and assist thee;
' to sweeten all thy cares, and smooth
' the rough uneven paths of life? Oh,
' I am doomed to never-ceasing horror
' and remorse! If misery can atone for
' such enormous guilt, I have felt it in
' the extreme; like an undying vulture,
' it preys upon my heart; to sorrow I
' am wedded; I hug that teeming con-
' solort to my soul; never, ah! never shall
' we part; for soon as my fame shall
' shine unclouded by the charge of trea-
' son that now hangs over it, I will de-
' vote myself to penitence and woe; a
' cold, damp pavement shall be my bed,
' my raiment shall be sackcloth, the
' fields shall furnish herbage for my food,
' the stream shall quench my thirst, the
' minutes shall be numbered by my
' groans, the night be privy to my
' strains of sorrow, till Heaven, in pity
' to my sufferings, release me from the
' penance I endure—perhaps the saints
' whom I have murdered will intercede
' for my remission.'

Such was the exercise of grief in which
the hapless Castilian consumed the night;
he had not yet consigned himself to
rest, when Renaldo entering his cham-
ber, displayed such a gleam of wildness
and rapture in his countenance, as over-
whelmed him with amazement; for, till
that moment, he had never seen his vi-
sage unobscured with woe. ' Pardon
' this abrupt intrusion, my friend,' cried
Melville, ' I could no longer withhold
' from your participation the great, the
' unexpected turn, which hath this night
' dispelled all my sorrows, and restored
' me to the fruition of ineffable joy.
' Monimia lives! the fair, the tender,
' the virtuous Monimia lives, and smiles
' upon my vows! This night I retrieved
' her from the grave: I held her in these
' arms; I pressed her warm, delicious
' lips to mine! O, I am giddy with in-
' tolerable pleasure!'

Don Diego was confounded at this
declaration, which he considered as the

effect of a disordered brain; he never
doubted that Renaldo's grief had at
length overpowered his reason, and that
his words were the effect of mere frenzy.
While he mused on this melancholy sub-
ject, the count composed his features;
and, in a succinct and well-connected
detail, explained the whole mystery of
his happiness, to the inexpressible as-
tonishment of the Spaniard, who shed tears
of satisfaction, and straining the Hun-
garian to his breast, ' O my son!' said
he, ' you see what recompence Heaven
' hath in store for those who pursue the
' paths of real virtue; those paths from
' which I myself have been fatally mis-
' led by a faithless vapour, which hath
' seduced my steps, and left me dark-
' ling in the abyss of wretchedness.
' Such as you describe this happy fair,
' was once my Serafina, rich in every
' grace of mind and body which nature
' could bestow. Had it pleased Heaven
' to bless her with a lover like Renaldo!
' but no more, the irrevocable shaft is
' fled; I will not taint your enjoyment
' with my unavailing sighs!'

Melville assured this disconsolate fa-
ther, that no pleasure, no avocation,
should ever so entirely ingross his mind,
but that he should still find an hour for
sympathy and friendship: he communi-
cated the invitation of Madam Clement,
and insisted upon his compliance, that
he might have an opportunity of seeing
and approving the object of his passion.
' I can refuse nothing to the request of
' Count De Melville,' replied the Spa-
niard, ' and it were ungrateful in me to
' decline the honour you propose. I
' own myself inflamed with a desire of
' beholding a young lady, whose per-
' fections I have seen reflected in your
' sorrow; my curiosity is, moreover,
' interested on account of that humane
' gentlewoman, whose uncommon ge-
' nerosity sheltered such virtue in distress;
' but my disposition is infectious, and
' will, I am afraid, hang like a damp up-
' on the general festivity of your friends.'

Melville would take no denial; and,
having obtained his consent, repaired to
the house of Joshua, whose countenance
seemed to unbend gradually, into a total
expression of joy and surprize, as he
learned the circumstances of this amaz-
ing event: he faithfully promised to at-
tend the count at the appointed hour,
and in the mean time earnestly exhorted
him to take some repose, in order to

quiet

quiet the agitation of his spirits, which must have been violently hurried on this occasion. The advice was salutary, and Renaldo resolved to follow it.

He returned to his lodgings, and laid himself down; but, notwithstanding the fatigue he had undergone, sleep refused to visit his eyelids, all his faculties being kept in motion by the ideas that crowded so fast upon his imagination: nevertheless, though his mind continued in agitation, his body was refreshed, and he arose in the forenoon with more serenity and vigour than he had enjoyed for many months; every moment his heart throbbed with new rapture, when he found himself on the brink of possessing all that his soul held dear and amiable. He put on his gayest looks and apparel; insisted upon the Castilian's doing the same honour to the occasion; and the alteration of dress produced such an advantageous change in the appearance of Don Diego, that when Joshua arrived at the appointed hour, he could scarce recognize his features, and complimented him very politely on the improvement of his looks.

True it is, the Spaniard was a personage of a very prepossessing mien, and noble deportment; and had not grief, by increasing his native gravity, in some measure discomposed the symmetry of his countenance, he would have passed for a man of a very amiable and engaging physiognomy. They set out in the Jew's coach for the house of Madam Clement, and were ushered into an apartment, where they found the clergyman and physician with that lady, to whom Don Diego and the Hebrew were by Melville introduced.

Before they had seated themselves, Renaldo enquired about the health of Monimia, and was directed to the next room by Madam Clement, who permitted him to go thither, and conducted her to the company. He was not slow in availing himself of this permission: he disappeared in an instant; and, during his short absence, Don Diego was strangely disturbed; the blood flushed, and forsook his cheeks by turns; a cold vapour seemed to shiver through his nerves; and at his breast he felt uncommon palpitation. Madam Clement observed his discomposure, and kindly enquired into the cause; when he replied, 'I have such an interest in what concerns the Count De Melville, and my

imagination is so much prepossessed with the perfections of Monimia, that I am, as it were, agonized with expectation; yet never did my curiosity before raise such tumults as those that now agitate my bosom.'

He had scarce pronounced these words, when the door re-opening, Renaldo led in this mirror of elegance and beauty, at sight of whom the Israelite's countenance was distorted into a state of admiration. But if such was the astonishment of Joshua, what were the emotions of the Castilian; when, in the beautiful orphan, he beheld the individual features of his long-lost Serafina!

His feelings are not to be described; the fond parent, whose affection shoots even to a sense of pain, feels not half such transport, when he unexpectedly retrieves a darling child from the engulfing billows or devouring flame. The hope of Zelos had been totally extinguished; his heart had been incessantly torn with anguish and remorse, upbraiding him as the murderer of Serafina. His, therefore, were the additional transports of a father disburdened of the guilt of such enormous homicide. His nerves were too much overpowered by this sudden recognition, to manifest the sensation of his soul by external signs. He started not, nor did he lift an hand in token of surprize; he moved not from the spot on which he stood; but, rivetting his eyes to those of the lovely phantom, remained without motion, until she, approaching with her lover, fell at his feet, and clasping his knees, exclaimed, 'May I yet call you father?'

This powerful shock aroused his faculties; a cold sweat bedewed his forehead; his knees began to totter; he dropped upon the floor, and throwing his arms around her, cried, 'O nature! O Serafina! Merciful Providence! thy ways are past finding out.' So saying, he fell upon her neck, and wept aloud; the tears of sympathetick joy trickled down her snowy bosom, that heaved with rapture inexpressible. Renaldo's eyes poured forth the briny stream; the cheeks of Madam Clement were not dry in this conjuncture; she knelted by Serafina, kissed her with all the eagerness of maternal affection, and with uplifted hands adored the Power that pre-ordained this blessed event; the clergyman and doctor intimately shared the

the general transport; and as for Joshua, the drops of true benevolence flowed from his eyes, like the oil on Aaron's beard, while he skipped about the room in an awkward extasy, and in a voice resembling the hoarse notes of the long-eared tribe, cried, 'O father Abraham! such a moving scene hath not been acted since Joseph disclosed himself unto his brethren in Egypt!'

Don Diego having found utterance to his passion, proceeded in this strain, 'O! my dear child! to find thee thus again, after our last unhappy parting, is wonderful! miraculous! Blessed be the all-good, Almighty Power, that saved thee for this hour of joy! Yet while my heart yearns towards thee; while I pant with inconceivable affection, and thus review these living features, which were so long my study and delight, I dare not ask by what mysterious means this meeting is effected; left, in the fond enquiry, I find my present bliss unreal, and awake to misery again!'

'O ever honoured father!' she replied, 'if to see your Serafina at your feet, melting with filial love and veneration, can impart a gleam of satisfaction to your breast, enjoy that pleasure, and behold her now restored to your protection and paternal will, which she never more will disobey. Alas! had Heaven thought proper to reserve another parent for this interview, our joys had been complete; but she hath already paid her debt to nature, and from the seats of bliss looks down well pleased on this interesting scene.'

'Ah, my Antonia!' cried the father, interrupting her, 'she is then at rest. Peace be to her unspotted soul; to have found her here had been too much. How my Serafina hath survived my blindfold rage, I know not; but sure the guilt of fair Antonia's death still hangs upon my soul!'

'Dismiss that fatal thought,' said Serafina; 'my mother quietly bade adieu to life in England; she peaceably expired within these arms, and with her latest breath prayed for her hapless husband.'—'Her mind was ever god-like,' he resumed, 'she was a saint in virtue, ill bestowed on such a wretch as me! yet thy words have razed a dreadful burden from my conscience; I am not then the dire assassin, who

'sacrificed his wife and daughter to an infernal motive, falsely titled honour? though I am more and more involved in a mystery, which I long to hear explained.'

'That shall be my task,' cried Renaldo; 'but first permit me to implore your sanction to my passion for the incomparable Serafina. You already know our mutual sentiments; and though I own the possession of such inestimable worth and beauty would be a recompence that infinitely transcends the merit I can plead, yet as it hath been my good fortune to inspire her with a mutual flame, I hope to reap from your indulgence, what I could not expect from my own desert; and here we present ourselves, in hope of your paternal assent and benediction.'

'Were she more fair, and good, and gentle than she is,' answered the Castilian, '(and to my partial observation, nought e'er appeared on earth more beautiful and engaging) I would approve your title to her heart, and recommend you to her smiles, with all a father's influence and power—yes, my daughter! my joy on this occasion is infinitely augmented by the knowledge of those tender ties of love, that bind thee to this amiable youth; a youth! to whose uncommon courage and generosity I owe my life and my subsistence, together with the inexpressible delight that now revels in my bosom!—Enjoy, my children, the happy fruits of your reciprocal attachment. May Heaven, which hath graciously conducted you through a labyrinth of perplexity and woe, to this transporting view of blissful days, indulge you with that uninterrupted stream of pure felicity, which is the hope, and ought to be the boon, of virtue such as yours!'

So saying, he joined their hands, and embraced them with the most cordial love and satisfaction; which diffused itself to every individual of the company, who fervently invoked the Almighty Power in behalf of this enraptured pair. The tumult of these emotions having a little subsided, and the Castilian being seated between Renaldo and his beautiful bride, he politely bespoke the indulgence of Madam Clement, begging she would permit him to demand the performance of the count's promise,

promise, that he might be forthwith made acquainted with those circumstances of his own fate, which he was so impatient to learn.

The lady having assured him, that she and all the company would take pleasure in hearing the recapitulation, the Spaniard, addressing himself to Melville, 'In the name of Heaven,' said he, 'how could you supplant that rival, who fell a sacrifice to my resentment, after he had bewitched the heart of Serafina? for sure the affection he had kindled in her breast, must have long survived his death.'—'That rival,' replied the count, 'who incurred your displeasure, was no other than Renaldo.' With these words, he applied to one eye a patch of black silk provided for the purpose, and turning his face towards Don Diego, that gentleman started with astonishment, crying, 'Good Heaven! the very countenance of Orlando, whom I slew! this is still more amazing.'

CHAP. XXX.

A RETROSPECTIVE LINK, NECESSARY FOR THE CONCATENATION OF THESE MEMOIRS.

INDULGE me with a patient hearing, proceeded the Hungarian, 'and all these riddles soon will be explained. Inflamed with the desire of seeing foreign countries, I disobeyed the will of an indulgent father, from whose house withdrawing privately, I set out for Italy, in disguise, by the way of Tyrol, visited Venice, Rome, Florence, and embarking at Naples, in an English ship, arrived at St. Lucar, from whence I repaired to Seville; there, in a few days, was my curiosity engaged by the fame of the fair Serafina, who was justly deemed the most accomplished beauty in that part of Spain.—Nay, blush not, gentle creature! for, by my hopes of heaven, thy charms were even injured by the cold applause of that resort!—Nevertheless, I was warmly interested by the uncommon character, and eagerly longed to see this pattern of perfection. As Don Diego did not train her up in that restraint to which the Spanish ladies are subjected, I soon found an opportunity of seeing her at

church; and no person here present will, I presume, doubt that I was instantly captivated by her beauty and deportment. Had I thought that Don Diego's favour was unengaged, perhaps I should have followed the dictates of vanity and inexperience, and presented myself in my own character, among the croud of her professed admirers. I knew her father had been an officer of distinguished rank and reputation, and did not doubt that he would have regarded a young soldier of unexceptionable pedigree, and I will even add, of untainted fame; nor did I suppose my own father could have objected against such an advantageous match; but, by dint of industrious enquiry, I learned, that the divine Serafina was already betrothed to Don Manuel De Mendoza, and this information overwhelmed me with despair.

After having revolved a thousand projects for retarding and preventing that detested union, I resolved to avail myself of my talent for drawing, and professed myself a master of that science, in hope of being employed by the father of Serafina, who, I knew, let slip no opportunity of improving his daughter's education. Accordingly, I had the good fortune to attract his notice, was invited to his house, honoured with his approbation, and furnished with unrestricted opportunities of conversing with the dear object of my love. The passion which her beauty had kindled, was, by the perfections of her mind, inflamed to such a degree of transport, as could not be concealed from her penetration. She chanced to relish my conversation; I gradually acquired her friendship; pity was the next passion that she entertained in my favour. I then ventured to disclose myself, and the dear charmer did not disapprove of my presumption. She and her mother had been perplexed with some religious scruples, concerning which they appealed to my opinion; and I was happy enough to set their minds at ease.

This sort of intercourse naturally created a mutual confidence among us; and, in a word, I was blessed with the daughter's love and mother's approbation. Don Diego will pardon those clandestine measures which we took, from a full persuasion, that it was

* was impossible to render him propitious to the views in which our hearts and hands were so deeply interested: * I did not then know how little he was addicted to superstition.

* Without entering into a detail of the schemes we projected to delay the happiness of Mendoza, I shall only observe, that knowing the fatal day was at length unalterably fixed, we determined to elude the purpose of Don Diego by flight, and every thing was actually prepared for our escape. * When the hour of appointment arrived, I repaired to the place at which I had proposed to enter the house, and stumbled in the dark over the body of a man still warm and bleeding. * Alarmed at this occurrence, I darted myself through the window, and rushing to the apartment of the ladies, (immortal powers!) beheld the peerless Serafina, and her virtuous mother, stretched on a couch, and in all appearance deprived of life.

* The company will easily conceive what agonies I felt at such a spectacle. * I ran towards the spot in a transport of horror! I clasped my lovely mistress in my arms, and finding her still breathing, endeavoured, but in vain, to wake her from the trance; Antonia was overwhelmed with the same lethargick power. My fancy was immediately struck with the apprehension of their being poisoned. Regardless of my own situation, I alarmed the family, called for assistance, and requested the servants to summon Don Diego to the dismal scene. I was informed, that their master had rode forth in manifest confusion; and while I pondered on this surprizing excursion, an apothecary in the neighbourhood entered the chamber, and having examined the pulses of the ladies, declared their lives were in no danger; and advised that they should be undressed and conveyed to bed. * While their women were busied in this employment, I went into the court-yard, attended by some of the servants with lights, in order to view the body of the man which I had found at my arrival. His apparel was mean, his countenance ferocious, a long spado was buckled to his thigh, and in his belt were stuck a brace of loaded pistols; so that we concluded he was some thief, who had waited for an op-

* portunity, and seeing the casement open, intended to rob the house, but was prevented and slain by Don Diego himself, whose retreat, however, did not a little confound our conjecture. * For my own part, I remained all night in the house, tortured with fear, vexation, and suspense.

* My hope was altogether disappointed by this unhappy accident, and I shuddered at the prospect of losing Serafina for ever, either by this mysterious malady, or by her marriage with Mendoza, which I now despaired of being able to defeat. The major-domo having waited several hours for his lord's return, without seeing him appear, thought proper to dispatch a messenger to Don Manuel, with an account of what had happened; and that nobleman arriving in the morning, took possession of the house. About four o'clock in the afternoon, Serafina began to stir, and at five she and her mother were perfectly awake.

* They no sooner recovered the use of reflection, than they gave signs of equal sorrow and amazement, and earnestly called for Isabella, who was privy to our design, and who, after a very minute enquiry, was found in a lone and solitary chamber, where she had been confined. Such was the confusion of the house, that no person ever dreamed of asking how I had entered; each domestick, in all probability, supposing that I had been introduced by his fellow; so that I tarried unquestioned, on pretence of concern for the distress of a family, in which I had been so generously entertained; and by Isabella lent my respects and duty to her ladies; she was therefore not a little surprized, when, after every other servant had withdrawn, she heard the lovely Serafina exclaim, with all the violence of grief, "Ah, Isabella! Orlando is no more!" but their astonishment was still greater, when she assured them of my being alive, and in the house. They recounted to her the adventure of last night, which she explained by informing them of the letters which Don Diego had intercepted; and they immediately concluded, that he had, in the precipitation of his wrath, killed, by mistake, the person who was found dead in the court-yard. This conjecture alarming them on my account, they, by the

medium

medium of Isabella, conjured me to leave the house, lest Don Diego should return, and accomplish his resentment; and I was persuaded to withdraw, after I had settled the channel of a correspondence with the confidante.

Being now obliged to alter our measures, because our former intention was discovered by Don Diego, I secured a retreat for Serafina and her mother, at the house of the English consul in Seville, who was my particular friend; and, next day, understanding from Isabella, that her lord had not yet re-appeared, and that Don Manuel was very urgent in his addresses, we concerted an assignation in the garden; and that same evening I was fortunate enough to convey my prize to the asylum I had prepared for their reception. Inexpressible was the rage of Mendoza, when he heard of their elopement: he raved like one deprived of reason; swore he would put all the servants of the family to the rack; and, in consequence of the intelligence he obtained by threats and promises, set on foot a very strict enquiry, in order to apprehend the fugitives and Orlando, who had, by some means or other, incurred his suspicion.

We eluded his search by the vigilance and caution of our kind host; and while we remained in concealment, were extremely astonished to hear, that the unfortunate Don Diego was proclaimed a traitor, and a price set upon his head. This information overwhelmed us all with the utmost affliction. Antonia lamented, without ceasing, the disgrace of her beloved lord, from whom she never would have withdrawn herself, but with the lively hope of a reconciliation, after the first transports of his ire should have subsided, and the real character of Orlando should have appeared: it was not long before we had reason to believe, that Mendoza was the accuser of Don Diego.

Nay, start not, Signior; Manuel was actually that traitor: this was the turn of his revenge; when he found himself disappointed in the hope of possessing the incomparable Serafina, he took a base advantage of your absence and retreat. He posted to Madrid, impeached you to the secretary of state, of having maintained a criminal correspondence with the enemies

of Spain, included me in his accusation, as a spy for the house of Austria, and framed such a plausible tale from the circumstances of your distress, that Don Diego was outlawed, and Mendoza gratified with a grant of his estate.

These melancholy incidents made a deep impression upon the mind of the virtuous Antonia; who, waving every other consideration, would have personally appeared for the vindication of her husband's honour, had not we dissuaded her from such a rash undertaking, by demonstrating her inability to contend with such a powerful antagonist, and representing, that her appearance would be infallibly attended with the ruin of Serafina, who would certainly fall into the hands of the villain to whom she had been contracted. We exhorted her to wait patiently for some happy revolution of fortune, and encouraged her with the hope of Don Diego's exerting himself effectually in his own defence.

Meanwhile, our worthy landlord was suddenly cut off by death; and his widow being resolved to retire into her own country, we secretly embarked in the same ship, and arrived in England about eighteen months ago. Antonia still continued to pine over the ruin of her house; as she could hear no tidings of Don Diego, she concluded he was dead, and mourned with unabating sorrow. In vain I assured her that soon as my own affairs should be adjusted, I would exert my whole endeavours to find and succour him. She could not imagine that a man of his spirit and disposition would live so long in obscurity; and her affliction derived new force from the death of the consul's widow, with whom she had lived in the most unbounded intimacy and friendship. From that day her health evidently declined: she foresaw her dissolution and comforted herself with the hope of seeing her husband and her friend, in a place where no treachery is felt, and no sorrow is known; confident of my integrity, and the purity of my love, she, in the most pathetic terms, recommended Serafina to my care.

Ha! weepst thou, fair excellence, at the remembrance of that tender

‘ scene, when the good Antonia, on the bed of death, joined thy soft hand to mine, and said, “ Renaldo, I bequeath this orphan to your love; it is a sacred pledge, which, if you cherish with due honour and regard, internal peace and happiness will ever smile within your bosom; but if you treat it with indifference, dishonour, or neglect, just Heaven will punish your breach of trust with everlasting disappointments and disquiet.” ’

‘ Signior Don Diego, I see you are moved, and therefore will not dwell on such distressful circumstances. The excellent Antonia exchanged this life for a more happy state; and so exquisite was the sorrow of the tender-hearted Serafina, as to torture me with the apprehension that she would not long survive her pious mother. How I obeyed the injunctions of that departing saint, Monimia (for that name she now assumed) can testify, until that artful serpent, Fathom, glided into our mutual confidence, abused our ears, poisoned our unsuspecting faith, and effected that fatal breach, productive of all the misery and vexation which we have suffered, and which is now so happily expelled.’

‘ Heaven,’ said the Castilian, ‘ hath visited me for the sins and errors of my youth; yet, such mercy hath been mingled with its chastisements, I dare not murmur or repine. The tears of penitence and sorrow shall water my Antonia’s grave; as for Mendoza, I rejoice at his treachery, by which the obligation of my promise is cancelled, and my honour fully acquitted. He shall not triumph in his guilt: my services, my character, and innocence, shall soon confront his perfidy, and, I hope, defeat his interest. The king is just and gracious, nor is my family and name unknown.’

Here the Jew interposing, presented to him a letter from a person of consequence at Madrid, whom Joshua had interested in the cause of Don Diego; that nobleman had already found means to represent the case of Zelos to his majesty, who had actually ordered Don Manuel to be confined, until the injured person should appear to justify himself, and prosecute his accuser according to the

terms of law: at the same time Don Diego was summoned to present himself before the king within a limited time, to answer to the charge which Mendoza had brought against him.

The Spaniard’s heart overflowed with gratitude and joy, when he read this intimation; he embraced the Jew; who, before Zelos could give utterance to his thoughts, told him that the Spanish ambassador at London, having been prepossessed in his favour, craved the honour of seeing Don Diego; and that he, Joshua, was ready to conduct them to the house.

‘ Then is my heart at rest!’ cried the Castilian; ‘ the house of Zelos once more shall lift up its head. I shall again revisit my native country with honour, and abase the villain who hath foiled my fame!—O my children! this day is replete with such joy and satisfaction, as I did not think had been in the power of Heaven to grant, without the interposition of a miracle! To you, Renaldo; to you, illustrious lady; and to these worthy gentlemen, am I indebted for the restoration of that for which alone I wish to live, and when my heart ceases to retain the obligation, may I forfeit the name of a Castilian, and scorn and dishonour be my portion!’

Perhaps all Europe could not produce another company so happy as that which now sat down to dinner in the house of Madam Clement, whose own benevolent heart was peculiarly adapted for such enjoyment. The lovers feasted their eyes more than their appetite, by a tender intercourse of glances, which needed not the slow interpretation of speech; while the Spaniard regarded them alternately with looks of wonder and paternal joy, and every individual surveyed the all-deserving pair with admiration and esteem.

Serafina taking the advantage of this general satisfaction, when the heart, softened into complacency, deposits every violent thought: ‘ I must now,’ said she, ‘ try my interest with Renaldo: the good company shall bear witness to my triumph or repulse. I do not ask you to forgive, but to withhold your vengeance from the wretched Fathom. His fraud, ingratitude, and villainy, are, I believe, unrivalled: yet his base designs have been defeated; and Heaven perhaps hath made him the involuntary

‘luntary instrument for bringing our
‘constancy and virtue to the test. Be-
‘sides, his perfidy is already punished
‘with the last degree of human misery
‘and disgrace: the doctor, who has
‘traced him in all his conduct and
‘vicissitudes of fortune, will draw a
‘picture of his present wretchedness,
‘which, I doubt not, will move your
‘compassion, as it hath already excited
‘mine.’ The generous hostess was ready
to enforce this charitable proposal, with
all her eloquence, when Melville, with
a look that well expressed his magna-
nimity of love, replied, ‘Such a boon
‘becomes the gentle Serafina. O! every
‘moment furnishes me with fresh matter
‘to admire the virtues of thy soul: if
‘thou, whose tender heart hath been so
‘rent with misery and anguish, canst
‘intercede for thy tormentor, who now
‘suffers in his turn, shall I refuse to
‘pardon the miserable wretch! no, let
‘me glory in imitating the great exam-
‘ple, and solicit Don Diego in behalf
‘of the same miscreant, whose perfidious
‘barbarity cost him such intolerable
‘woe.—‘Enough,’ cried the Castilian,
‘I have disclaimed the vindictive prin-
‘ciples of a Spaniard; and leave the
‘miserable object to the sting of his own
‘conscience, which soon or late, will
‘not fail to avenge the wrongs we have
‘sustained from his deceit.’

C H A P. XXXI.

THE HISTORY DRAWS NEAR A
PERIOD.

UNIVERSAL was the applause
which they acquired by this noble
sacrifice of their resentment: the after-
noon was spent in the utmost harmony
and good humour; and, at the earnest
solicitation of Renaldo, whose fancy still
harboured the apprehensions of another
separation, Don Diego consented that
the indissoluble knot should be tied be-
tween that young gentleman and Sera-
fina in two days; and the place appoint-
ed for the ceremony, was the very church
where they had been restored to the arms
of each other.

The lovely bride, with a silent blush
that set her lover's heart on fire, sub-
mitted to this determination; in conse-
quence of which, the company was be-
spoke for that auspicious hour, and the

evening being pretty far advanced, they
took leave of the ladies, and retired to
their respective homes; Don Diego and
his future son-in-law being reconducted
to their lodgings, in the coach of the
Jew; who, taking an opportunity of be-
ing alone with Melville, observed that
it would be necessary on this occasion to
supply the Castilian with a sum of mo-
ney, in order to support his dignity and
independence, in furnishing Serafina
with every thing suitable to her rank and
merit; and that he would willingly ac-
commodate him, provided he knew how
to propose it so as to give no offence to
his punctilious disposition.

Renaldo, thanking him for this ge-
nerous anticipation, advised him to soli-
cit the Spaniard's correspondence in the
way of business, and to put the whole
on the footing of his own interest; by
which means Don Diego's delicacy could
sustain no affront. Fraught with this
instruction, the Israelite desired a pri-
vate audience of the Castilian; in which,
after an apology for the freedom of his
demand, ‘Signior Don Diego,’ said he,
‘as your fortune hath been so long em-
‘bezzled by your adversary in Spain,
‘and your correspondence with that
‘country entirely cut off, it is not to be
‘supposed that your finances are at pre-
‘sent in such a condition, as to main-
‘tain the splendor of your family.
‘Count De Melville's whole fortune is
‘at your command; and had not he
‘been afraid of giving umbrage to the
‘peculiar delicacy of your sentiments,
‘he would have pressed you to use it
‘for your convenience. For my own
‘part, over and above the inclination I
‘have to serve Don Diego, I consult
‘my own private advantage in desiring
‘you to accept my service on this occa-
‘sion. Money is the chief commodity
‘in which I deal, and if you honour
‘me with your commands, I shall be
‘a gainer by my obedience.’

Don Diego replied, with a smile that
denoted how well he understood the
meaning of this address, ‘Surely, Sig-
‘nior, I am bound by the strongest
‘ties, to exert my utmost endeavours
‘for your advantage; and I pray God
‘this your proposal may have that issue:
‘I am well acquainted with the count's
‘generosity and refined notions of ho-
‘nour; and too much obliged by him
‘already, to hesitate with punctilious
‘reserve in accepting his future assist-

ance: nevertheless, since you have contrived a scheme for removing all scruples of that sort, I shall execute it with pleasure; and, in the form of business, you shall have all the security I can give for what shall be necessary to answer my present occasions.'

The preliminaries being thus settled, Joshua advanced for his use a thousand pounds, for which he would take neither bond, note, nor receipt; desiring only that the Castilian would mark it in his own pocket-book, that the debt might appear, in case any accident should befall the borrower. Although the Spaniard had been accustomed to the uncommon generosity of Melville, he could not help wondering at this nobleness of behaviour, so little to be expected from any merchant, much less from a Jewish broker.

While this affair was on the anvil, Renaldo, who could no longer withhold the communication of his happiness from his sister and relations in Germany, took up the pen; and in a letter to his brother-in-law, recounted all the circumstances of the surprizing turn of fate which he had experienced since his arrival in England: he likewise related the story of Don Diego, informed them of the day appointed for his nuptials, and intreated the major to make a journey to London with his wife; or, if that should be impracticable, to come as far as Brussels, where they should be met by him and his Serafina. There was now but one day between him and the accomplishment of his dearest wish, and that was spent in procuring a license, and adjusting the preparations for the grand festival. Don Diego in the forenoon visited Madam Clement, to whom he repeated his warm acknowledgments of her bounty and maternal affection to his daughter; and presented to Serafina, bank notes to the amount of five hundred pounds, to defray the necessary expence of her wedding ornaments.

All the previous steps being taken for the solemnization of this interesting event, and the hour of appointment arrived, the bridegroom, accompanied by his father-in-law, hastened to the place of rendezvous, which was the vestry-room of the church we have already described; where they were received by the good clergyman in his canonicals; and here they had not waited many minutes,

when they were joined by Madam Clement and the amiable bride, escorted by the friendly physician, who had all along bore such a share in their concerns. Serafina was dressed in a sack of white satin, and the ornaments of her head were adjusted in the Spanish fashion, which gave a peculiar air to her appearance, and an additional spirit to those attractions which engaged the heart of each beholder. There was nothing remarkable in the habit of Renaldo, who had copied the plainness and elegance of his mistress; but when she entered the place, his features were animated with a double proportion of vivacity, and their eyes meeting, seemed to kindle a blaze which diffused warmth and joy through the countenances of all present.

After a short pause, her father led her to the altar, and gave her away to the transported Renaldo, before the priest who performed the ceremony, and bestowed the nuptial benediction on this enraptured pair. The sanction of the church being thus obtained, they withdrew into the vestry, where Melville sealed his title on her rosy lips, and presented his wife to the company, who embraced her in their turns, with fervent wishes for their mutual happiness.

Though the scene of this transaction was remote from any inhabited neighbourhood, the church was surrounded by a crowd of people; who, with uncommon demonstrations of surprize and admiration, petitioned Heaven to bless so fair a couple. Such, indeed, was their eagerness to see them, that some lives were endangered by the pressure of the crowd, which attended them with loud acclamations to the coach; after the bridegroom had deposited in the hands of the minister, one hundred pounds for the benefit of the poor of that parish, and thrown several handfuls of money among the multitude. Serafina embarked in Madam Clement's conveyance, with that good lady and Don Diego; while Renaldo, with the clergyman and doctor, followed in Joshua's coach, to a pleasant country house upon the Thames, at the distance of a few miles from London: this the Jew had borrowed from the owner for a few days, and there they were received by that honest Hebrew, who had provided a very elegant entertainment for the occasion; he had also bespoke a small but excellent band of musick, which regaled their

their ears while they sat at dinner; and the afternoon being calm and serene, he prevailed on them to take the air on the river, in a barge which he had prepared for the purpose.

But, notwithstanding this diversity of amusement, Renaldo would have found it the longest day he had ever passed, had not his imagination been diverted by an incident which employed his attention during the remaining part of the evening. They had drank tea, and engaged in a party at whist, when they were surprized with a noise of contention from a public-house that fronted the windows of the apartment in which they sat. Alarmed at this uproar, they forsook their cards; and, throwing up the casement, beheld a hearse surrounded by four men on horseback, who had stopped the carriage, and violently pulled the driver from his seat. This uncommon arrest had engaged the curiosity of the publican's family, who stood at the door to observe the consequence; when, all of a sudden, appeared a person in canonicals, well mounted; who, riding up to those who maltreated the driver, bestowed upon one of them such a blow with the but-end of his whip, as laid him sprawling on the ground; and, springing from his saddle upon the box, took the reins into his own hand, swearing with great vehemence, that he would murder every man who should attempt to obstruct the hearse.

The good priest who had married Renaldo, was not a little scandalized at this ferocious behaviour in a clergyman, and could not help saying aloud, he was a disgrace to the cloth; when the horseman looking up to the window, replied, 'Sir, may I be d—n'd if any man in England has a greater respect for the cloth than I have; but, at present, I am quite distracted.' So saying, he whipped up the horses, and had actually disentangled the hearse from those who surrounded it; when he was opposed by another troop, one of whom alighted with great expedition, and cut the harness so as that he could not possibly proceed. Finding himself thus driven to bay, he leaped upon the ground, and exercised his weapon with such amazing strength and agility, that several of his antagonists were left motionless on the field, before he was overpowered and disarmed by dint of numbers, who assailed him on all sides.

The mad parson being thus taken prisoner, an elderly person of a very prepossessing appearance, went up to the hearse, and unbolting the door, a young lady sprung out, and shrieking, ran directly to the public house, to the infinite astonishment and affright of the whole family, who believed it was the spirit of the deceased person, whose body lay in the carriage. Renaldo, who was with difficulty restrained from interposing in behalf of the clergyman against such odds, no sooner perceived this apparition, than supposing her to be some distressed damsel, his Quixotism awoke, he descended in an instant, and rushed into the house, among those who pursued the fair phantom. Don Diego and the physician took the same road, while the real clergyman and Joshua tarried with the ladies, who were, by this time, very much interested in the event.

Melville found the young lady in the hands of the old gentleman, who had released her from the hearse, and who now bitterly upbraided her for her folly and disobedience; while she protested, with great vivacity, that whatever she might suffer from his severity, she would never submit to the hateful match he had proposed, nor break the promise she had already made to the gentleman who had now attempted to rescue her from the tyranny of a cruel father. This declaration was followed by a plentiful shower of tears, which the father could not behold with unmoistened eyes, although he reviled her with marks of uncommon displeasure; and, turning to the count, 'I appeal to you, Sir,' said he, 'whether I have not reason to curse the undutiful obstinacy of that pert baggage, and renounce her for ever as an alien to my blood. She has, for some months, been solicited in marriage by an honest citizen, a thirty thousand pound man; and, instead of listening to such an advantageous proposal, she hath bestowed her heart upon a young fellow not worth a groat.—Ah, you degenerate hussy! this comes of your plays and romances; if thy mother were not a woman of an unexceptionable life and conversation, I should verily believe thou art no child of mine: run away with a beggar! for shame!'

'I suppose,' replied Renaldo, 'the person

‘ person to whom your daughter’s affection inclines, is that clergyman who exerted himself so manfully at the door.’—‘ Clergyman!’ cried the other, ‘ adad! he has more of the devil than the church about him. A ruffian! he has, for aught I know, murdered the worthy gentleman whom I intended for my son-in-law; and the rogue, if I had not kept out of his way, would, I suppose, have served me with the same sauce. Me! who have been his master for many years, and had resolved to make a man of him. Sir, he was my own clerk; and this is the return I have met with from the serpent which I cherished in my bosom.’

Here he was interrupted by the arrival of the citizen for whom he had expressed such concern: that gentleman had received a contusion upon one eye, by which the sight was altogether obstructed; so that he concluded he should never retrieve the use of that organ, and with great clamour took all the spectators to witness the injury he had sustained; he entered the room with manifest perturbation, demanded satisfaction of the father, and peremptorily declared it should not be a lost eye to him, if there was law in England. This unseasonable demand, and the boisterous manner in which it was made, did not at all suit the present humour of the old gentleman, who told him peevishly he owed him no eye; and bade him go and ask reparation of the person who had done him wrong.

The young lady snatching this favourable occasion, earnestly intreated Melville and his company to intercede with her father in behalf of her lover; who, she assured them, was a young gentleman of a good family, and uncommon merit; and, in compliance with her request, they invited him and his daughter to the house in which they lodged, where they would be disincumbered of the crowd which this dispute had gathered together, and more at leisure to consult about the measures necessary to be taken. The old gentleman thanked them for their courtesy, which he did not think proper to refuse; and while he led, or rather hauled Mademoiselle over the way, under the auspices of the Castilian, Renaldo set the lover at liberty, made him a tender of his good offices, and advised him to wait

at the publick-house for an happy issue of their negotiation.

The pseudo-parson was very much affected by this generous proffer, for which he made suitable acknowledgments, and protested before God, he would die a thousand deaths, rather than part with his dear Charlotte. Her father no sooner entered the apartment, than he was known by Joshua to be a considerable trader in the city of London, and the merchant was glad to find himself among his acquaintance. He was so full of the story which had brought him thither, that he had scarce sat down, when he began to complain of his hard fate, in having an only child, who was so mean, stubborn, and contumacious; and every sentence was concluded with an apostrophe of reproaches to the delinquent.

The Jew having allowed him to ring out his alarm, consoled his misfortune, and gravely counselled the young lady to wean her affections from such an unworthy object; for he supposed her favourite was a man of no principle, or liberal endowments, otherwise her father would not exclaim so bitterly against her conduct. Charlotte, who wanted neither beauty nor understanding, assured him, that her lover’s character was, in all respects, unblemished; for the truth of which assertion she appealed to her papa; who owned, with reluctance, that the young man was a gentleman by birth, that he had served him with remarkable diligence and integrity, and that his accomplishments were far superior to his station in life. ‘ But then,’ said he, ‘ the fellow has not a shilling of his own; and would you have me give away my daughter to a beggar?’

‘ God forbid!’ cried the Jew, ‘ I always understood you possessed an ample fortune, and am sorry to find it otherwise.’—‘ Otherwise!’ replied the citizen, with some acrimony; ‘ take care what you say, Sir; a merchant’s credit is not to be tampered with.’—‘ I beg your pardon,’ answered the Hebrew, ‘ I concluded that your circumstances were bad, because you objected to the poverty of the young man, after you had owned he was possessed of every other qualification to make your daughter happy; for it is not to be imagined, that you would thwart her inclinations, or seek to render an only child

‘ child miserable, on account of an obstacle which you yourself could easily remove. Let us suppose you can afford to give with your daughter ten thousand pounds, which would enable this young man to live with credit and reputation, and engage advantageously in trade, for which you say he is well qualified: the alternative then will be, whether you would rather see her in the arms of a deserving youth, whom she loves, enjoying all the comforts of life, with a moderate fortune, which it will always be in your own power to improve; or tied for life to a monied man, whom she detests, cursing her hard fate, and despising that superfluity of wealth, in spite of which she finds herself so truly wretched?’

The old gentleman seemed to be startled at this observation, which was reinforced by Renaldo’s saying, that he would, moreover, enjoy the unutterable pleasure of giving happiness to a worthy man, whose gratitude would co-operate with his love, in approving himself a dutiful son, as well as an affectionate husband. He then represented the family disquiets, and dismal tragedies, produced from such mercenary and compulsive matches; and, in conclusion, related the story of Don Diego and his daughter; which, when the merchant heard, he started up with marks of terror in his countenance, and throwing up the casement, called upon Valentine with great vociferation: this was the name of his daughter’s admirer; who no sooner heard the summons, than he flew to the spot from whence it came, and the merchant, without any farther preamble, seizing his hand, joined it with that of Charlotte, saying, with great trepidation, ‘ Here, take her, in the name of God, and thank this honourable company for your good fortune.’

The lovers were transported with exquisite joy at the sudden determination in their favour, Valentine having kissed the hand of his mistress, with all the eagerness of rapture, and acknowledged the merchant’s generosity, paid his respects to the ladies with a very polite address, and with demonstrations of uncommon gratitude and sensibility, thanked the gentlemen, and the count in particular, for their good offices, to which he attributed the happiness he now enjoyed. While Serafina and Madam Clement caressed the amiable Char-

lotte, the rest of the company congratulated her admirer upon his choice and success; though the clergyman could not help reprehending him for profaning the sacerdotal habit.

Valentine heartily asked pardon for having given such cause of offence; and hoped he should be forgiven, as it was a disguise which he thought absolutely necessary for the execution of a scheme upon which his happiness altogether depended. He then, at the request of Renaldo, unfolded the mystery of the hearse, by giving them to understand, that Charlotte’s father having got inkling of their mutual passion, had dismissed his clerk, and conveyed his daughter to a country-house in the neighbourhood of London, in order to cut off their correspondence: notwithstanding these precautions, they had found means to communicate with each other by letters, which were managed by a third person; and his rival being very importunate in his solicitations, they had concerted the expedient of the hearse, which he provided and conducted through a road contiguous to the end of the merchant’s garden, where Charlotte being apprized of the design, waited for its approach, and embarked in it without hesitation. Valentine thought himself sufficiently screened from discovery by his disguise; but he was unfortunately met by a servant of the family, who recollected his features, and immediately gave the alarm; upon which the father and his friends took horse, and pursued them by two different roads, until they were overtaken at this place.

He had scarce finished this short relation, when his rival bluntly entering the apartment, with an handkerchief tied round his eye, committed Valentine to the charge of a constable, who attended him by a warrant from a justice of the peace in that neighbourhood; and threatened to prosecute the merchant on an action of damages for the loss of an eye, which he said he had sustained in his service. The company endeavoured to appease this citizen, by representing, that his misfortune was no other than a common inflammation; nor was it owing to malice aforethought, but entirely to the precipitate passion of an incensed young man, who, by the bye, acted in his own defence. At the same time the merchant promised to make any reasonable satisfaction; upon which

which the other demanded an obligation, importing, that he would, in ten days from the date, bestow upon him his daughter in marriage, with a portion of fifteen thousand pounds; or, in case of failure, pay him double the sum.

The merchant, exasperated at this extravagant demand, told him flatly, he had already disposed of his daughter to Valentine, who, he believed, was a much more deserving man; and that he was ready to wait upon the magistrate who had granted the warrant, in order to give bail for his future son-in-law. This was a mortifying declaration to the plaintiff, though he consoled himself with the hope of being a gainer by the loss of his eye; and now the pain was over, would have been very sorry to find his sight retrieved. The old gentleman, Joshua, and Renaldo, accompanied the prisoner to the house of the justice, where he was immediately admitted to bail: upon their return, Valentine shifted his dress, and they supped together with great cordiality and mirth, maintained at the expence of the discarded lover.

After supper, Don Diego walked a minuet with Madam Clement, for whom, by this time, he had contracted an extraordinary degree of affection. Valentine had the honour to dance with the incomparable Serafina, whose beauty and attractions dazzled the eyes of the new comers, and struck her bashful partner with awe and confusion; and Melville presented his hand to the agreeable Charlotte, who performed so much to the satisfaction of her father, that he could not help expressing his joy and pride: he praised God for throwing him in the way of our company, and engaged the clergyman to unite the young couple; after having appointed a day for the ceremony, and invited all present to the wedding. The evening having been insensibly consumed in these avocations, and the night pretty far advanced, the ladies withdrew without ceremony; and the retreat of Serafina filled Renaldo's breast with tumult and emotion; his blood began to flow in impetuous tides, his heart to beat with redoubled vigour and velocity, while his eyes seemed to flash with more than human splendor: now his imagination began to anticipate with the enthusiastick rage of an inspired Sybil; he was instantaneously transported from the conversation, and every nerve was braced to such

a degree of impatience, that human nature could not long endure the tension.

He, therefore, having withstood the impulse about a quarter of an hour, at length gave way to his impetuosity; and, springing from his friends, found himself in a dark passage, at the farther end of which he perceived Madam Clement coming out of a chamber with a light, which at sight of him she set down, and vanished in a moment. This was the star that pointed to his paradise; he hailed the signal, entered the apartment; and, like a lion rushing on his prey, approached the nuptial-bed, where Serafina, surrounded by all the graces of beauty, softness, sentiment, and truth, lay trembling as a victim at the altar, and strove to hide her blushes from his view: the door was shut, the light extinguished; he owned his lot was more than mortal man could claim.

Here let me draw the decent veil, that ought to shade the sacred mysteries of Hymen. Away, unhallowed scoffers, who profane with idle pleasantries, or immodest hint, these holy rites; and leave those happy lovers to enjoy, in one another's arms, unutterable bliss, the well-earned palm of virtue and of constancy, which had undergone the most severe refinement: a more deserving pair night's curtain shrouds not in its dark extent.

The thoughts of Renaldo's felicity threw a damp on the spirits of Valentine, who saw the term of his probation protracted a few days longer, and could not help wishing in his heart that he had achieved the adventure which would have abridged his expectation, though at the expence of the old gentleman's displeasure. He filled a bumper to the health of the bride and bridegroom; and, throwing up his eyes, with marks of admiration, exclaimed, 'How happy is the count! Alas, five days longer must I rein my impatience!'—'It is but reasonable, you rogue, that your betters should have the start of you,' said the merchant, who did him justice in the glass, and counselled him to drown his impatience with good claret. The youth followed his advice, and it was late before the company retired to rest.

These citizens, however, resolved to seize an opportunity of rallying the new-married couple, according to custom; and with that view arose early in the morning, on the supposition of finding them

them still asleep; but they were not a little surprized, when they entered the breakfasting room, to see Renaldo and his amiable bedfellow already dressed, and waiting to do the honours of the house. The old gentleman would fain have cracked a joke upon their extraordinary dispatch; but he was so much over-awed by the dignity, and tamed by the sweetness of Serafina's carriage, that he durst not give utterance to his conception; and Valentine stood silent and abashed, as in the presence of a superior being. After breakfast, these gentlemen and Charlotte again expressed their sense of the obligations they owed to this happy family, repeated their invitation; and, taking leave, returned to London in a coach that was provided over night.

Our friends being thus left to themselves, Don Diego turning towards Melville, 'Now,' said he, 'that I have yielded to the impatience of your love, as well as to the eagerness of my own desire to make you happy, I must beg leave to interrupt, for a little while, the stream of your mutual pleasure, and propose a melancholy excursion, which, however, will not be wholly void of enjoyment. I have too long delayed the performance of my duty at Antonia's grave: let us spend the forenoon in that pious pilgrimage; I will drop a few tears to the memory of that excellent woman, and never afterwards shall my friends be troubled with my grief.'

The proposal being universally approved, they set out for the place, which had oft been visited by the gentle Serafina, who conducted her father to a black marble-stone, which Renaldo had ordered to be laid over the grave; and, as he kneeled to kiss the monument, he perceived this plain inscription in the Spanish tongue. '*Antonia De Zelos primera en todo lo que es ser bueno, y sin segundo en todo lo que fué ser desdichado, quedad con dios!*' that is, '*Antonia De Zelos, unmatched in virtue, and unequalled in misfortune, adieu!*' — 'O faithful record!' cried the Castilian, smiting his breast, while his tears distilled upon the marble; 'thy goodness was the gift of Heaven, but thy misfortunes were derived from the guilt of Don Diego; yet his sorrow shall expiate his offence, and his penitence find favour in the sight of Hea-

ven. Rest, rest, ill-fated virtue! eternal peace shall guard thy tomb, and angels minister to thy unspotted shade; nor shall thine ashes lie in dark obscurity: here will I raise a monument more suited to thy excellence and name.' Serafina melted with filial tenderness, nor were the rest unmoved at this affecting scene, which Don Diego did not quit without reluctance.

C H A P. XXXII.

THE LONGEST AND THE LAST.

THE nature of this visit had softened every heart, and saddened every countenance; and they walked in solemn silence to the other side of the church-yard, in order to regain their carriages; when, at the turning of the stile, they saw a young woman, in wretched attire, running out of a poor habitation, wringing her hands in all the agony of despair. Notwithstanding the distraction in her countenance, and the meanness of her apparel, she discovered a regularity of features, and a delicacy of air, which did not at all correspond with the misery of her equipage. These exhibitions of extreme distress soon attracted the notice and compassion of our company; and Melville's beautiful help-mate, accosting this forlorn damsel with a pity-breathing aspect, asked the cause of her disorder.

'Alas, dear lady!' cried the other, with all the emphasis of woe, 'an unhappy gentleman now breathes his last, within this inhospitable hovel, amidst such excess of misery, as would melt the most flinty bosom: what, then, must I feel, who am connected with him by the strongest ties of love and conjugal affection!' — 'Who is the unfortunate object?' said the physician. 'He was once well known in the gay world,' replied the young woman: 'his name is Fathom.' Every individual of the company started at mention of that detested name. Serafina began to tremble with emotion; and Renaldo, after a short pause, declared he would go in, not with a view to exult over his misery, but in order to contemplate the catastrophe of such a wicked life, that the moral might be the more deeply engraved on his remembrance. The young countess, whose

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tender heart could not bear the shock of such a spectacle, retired to the coach with Madam Clement and the Jew, while Renaldo, accompanied by the rest, entered a dismal apartment, altogether void of furniture and convenience, where they beheld the wretched hero of these Memoirs, stretched almost naked upon straw, insensible, convulsed, and seemingly in the grasp of death. He was worn to the bone either by famine or distemper; his face was overshadowed with hair and filth; his eyes were sunk, glazed, and distorted; his nostrils dilated; his lips covered with a black slough, and his complexion faded into a pale clay-colour, tending to a yellow hue: in a word, the extremity of indigence, squalor, and distress, could not be more feelingly represented.

While Melville perused this melancholy lesson, and groaning, cried, 'Behold the fate of man!' he perceived a letter in the right-hand of the unfortunate Fathom, which lay fast clinched across his breast. Curious to know the contents of this paper, which the young woman said he had kept in that position for several days, he drew nearer the wretched couch, and was not a little surprized to see it addressed to the Right Honourable Renaldo Count De Melville, to the care of Mr. Joshua Mannasseh, merchant in London. When he attempted to disengage this billet from the author's hand, the sorrowing female fell on her knees, entreating him to desist, and telling him, she had promised, upon oath, to communicate the contents to no person upon earth, but to carry the letter, upon her husband's decease, to the gentleman to whose care it was directed.

Renaldo assured her, upon his honour, that he was the very Renaldo Count De Melville for whom it was intended; and the young creature was so much confounded at this information, that before she could recollect herself, Melville had opened the billet and read these words.

'IF this paper should fall into the hands of the noble Renaldo, he will understand that Fathom was the most execrable traitor that ever imposed upon unsuspecting benevolence, or attempted to betray a generous benefactor. His whole life was a series of fraud, perfidy, and the most abomi-

nable ingratitude: but, of all the crimes that lay heavy upon his soul, his being accessory to the death of the incomparable Serafina, whose father he had also robbed, was that for which he despaired of Heaven's forgiveness, notwithstanding the dreadful compunction and remorse which have long preyed upon his heart, together with the incredible misery and deplorable death which by this time he hath undergone. Though these sufferings and sorrows cannot atone for his enormous guilt, perhaps they will excite the compassion of the humane Count De Melville; at least, this confession, which my conscience dictates under all the terrors of death and futurity, may be a warning for him to avoid henceforth a smiling villain, like the execrable Fathom, upon whose miserable soul Almighty God have mercy!

Renaldo was deeply affected with the contents of this scroll, which denoted such horror and despair. He saw there could be no dissimulation or sinister design in this profession of penitence: he beheld the condition of the writer, which put all his humane passions in commotion; so that he remembered nothing of Fathom but his present distress. He could scarce contain those indications which might have been justly deemed the effect of weakness and infirmity; and having desired the physician and clergyman to contribute their assistance for the benefit of that wretch's soul and body, he ran to the coach and communicated the letter to the ladies; at the same time drawing a picture of the object he had seen, which brought tears into the eyes of the gentle Serafina; who earnestly intreated her lord to use his endeavours for the relief and recovery of the unhappy man, that he might, if possible, live to enjoy the benefit of mature repentance, and not die in that dreadful despair which he manifested in the letter.

Renaldo returning to the house, found the pious clergyman reading prayers with great fervency; while Don Diego stood with his right hand upon his breast, looking stedfastly upon the agonizing Fathom, and the young woman kneeled with her streaming eyes lifted up to Heaven, in an extasy of grief and devotion: the physician had run to an apothecary's shop in the neighbourhood, from whence he soon returned with an assistant,

assistant, who applied a large blister to the back of the miserable patient, while the female, by the doctor's direction, moistened his mouth with a cordial which he had prescribed.

These charitable steps being taken, Count De Melville intreated the apothecary's servant to procure a tent-bed for the accommodation of the sick person, with all imaginable dispatch; and, in less than an hour, one was actually pitched, and Fathom lifted into it, after he had been shifted, and in some measure purified from the dregs of his indigence. During this transaction, the ladies were conducted to a tavern not far off, where dinner was bespoke, that they might be at hand to see the effect of their charity; which was not confined to what we have already described, but extended so far, that in a little time the apartment was comfortably furnished, and the young creature provided with change of apparel, and money to procure the necessaries of subsistence.

Notwithstanding all their care, the wretched Fathom still remained insensible, and the doctor pronounced a very unfavourable prognostick, while he ordered a pair of additional vesicatories to be laid upon his arms, and other proper medicines to be administered. After dinner, the ladies ventured to visit the place; and when Serafina crossed the threshold, the weeping female fell at her feet, and kissing her robe, exclaimed, 'Sure you are an angel from Heaven!' The alteration in her dress had made a very agreeable change in her appearance, so that the countess could now look upon her without shuddering at her distress: and, as Fathom was not in a condition to be disturbed, she took this opportunity of inquiring by what steps that unfortunate wretch was conveyed from the prison, in which she knew he had been confined, to the place where he now lay in such extremity; and by what occurrence he had found a wife in such an abyss of misfortune. Here the other's tears began to flow afresh. 'I am ashamed,' said she, 'to reveal my own folly; yet I dare not refuse a satisfaction of this kind to a person who has laid me under such signal obligations.'

She then proceeded to relate her story, by which it appeared, she was no other than the fair and unhappy Elinor, whom the artful Fathom had debauched upon

his first arrival in town, in the manner already described in these Memoirs. 'Heaven,' continued she, 'was pleased to restore the use of my reason which I had lost, when I found myself abandoned by the count; but, all my connection with my own family being entirely cut off, and every door shut against a poor creature who could procure no recommendation, except the certificate signed by the physician of Bedlam, which, instead of introducing me to service, was an unsurmountable objection to my character; I found myself destitute of all means of subsisting, unless I would condescend to live the infamous and wretched life of a courtesan; an expedient rendered palatable by the terrors of want co-operating with the reflection of the irretrievable loss I had already sustained. I ask pardon for offending your chaste ears with this impure confession of my guilt, which, Heaven knows! I then did, and now do, look upon with abhorrence and detestation. I had already forfeited my innocence, and wanted resolution to encounter misery and death. Nevertheless, before I could determine to embrace the condition of a prostitute, I was one day accosted in the Park by an elderly gentleman, who sat down by me upon a bench, and taking notice of the despondence which was evident in my countenance, pressed me to make him acquainted with the nature of my misfortune. So much sympathy and good sense appeared in his deportment and conversation, that I gratified his request; and he, in return for my confidence, saved me from the most horrible part of my prospect, by taking me into his protection, and reserving me for his own appetite. In this situation I lived a whole year, until I was deprived of my keeper by an apopleckick fit, and turned out of doors by his relations; who did not, however, strip me of the cloaths and moveables which I owed to his bounty. Far from being as yet reconciled to a vicious life, I resolved to renounce the paths of shame; and converting my effects into ready money, hired a small shop, and furnished it with haberdashery ware, intending to earn an honest livelihood by the sale of these commodities, together with the plain work in which I hoped

hoped to be employed so soon as my talents should be known. But this scheme did not answer my expectation. The goods spoiled upon my hands; and, as I was a stranger in the neighbourhood, nobody would intrust me with any other business: so that, notwithstanding the most parsimonious œconomy, I ran in debt to my landlord, who seized my effects; and an hosier, from whom I had received some parcels upon credit, took out a writ against me; by virtue of which, I was arrested and imprisoned in the Marshalsea, where I found my first seducer. Good Heaven! what did I feel at this unexpected meeting, overwhelmed as I was before with my own distress! I, with a loud scream, fainted away; and, when I recovered, found myself in the arms of Mr. Fathom, who wept over me with great affliction. All his prospects of gaiety had now vanished, and his heart was softened by his own misfortunes, to a feeling of another's woe, as well as to a due sense of his own guilt. He expressed the deepest sorrow for having been the occasion of my ruin, endeavoured to comfort me with promise of assistance; and, indeed, by practising medicine among the prisoners, made shift to keep us both from starving. But, surely, no sinner underwent such severe remorse as that which he suffered during his imprisonment. From the day of our meeting, I never once saw him smile; a melancholy cloud continually overhung his countenance. He numbered the minutes by his groans; he used to start with horror from his sleep; and, striking his breast, would exclaim, "O Elinor! I am the worst of villains!" Sometimes he seemed disordered in his brain, and raved about Renaldo and Monimia: in a word, his mind was in a dreadful situation; and all his agonies were communicated to me, whom by this time he had married, in order to make some atonement for my wrongs. Wretched as he then was, I remembered the accomplished youth who had captivated my virgin heart; the old impressions still remained; I saw his penitence, pitied his misfortune; and, his wife being dead, consented to join his fate, the ceremony having been performed by a fellow-prisoner, who

was in orders. Though his hard-hearted creditor had no other chance of being payed, than that of setting him at liberty, he lent a deaf ear to all our supplications; and this cruelty conspiring with the anguish of my husband's own reflection, affected his health and spirits to such a degree, that he could no longer earn the miserable pittance which had hitherto supported our lives. Then our calamities began to multiply. Indigence and famine stared us in the face; and it was with the utmost difficulty that we resisted their attacks, by selling or pledging our wearing-apparel, until we were left almost quite naked, when we found ourselves discharged by an act passed for the relief of insolvent debtors. This charitable law, which was intended for a consolation to the wretched, proved to us the most severe disaster: for we were turned out into the streets, utterly destitute of food, raiment and lodging; at a time when Mr. Fathom was so weakened by his distemper, that he could not stand alone. I supported him from door to door, imploring the compassion of charitable Christians; and was at length permitted to shelter him in this miserable place, where his disease gaining ground, he lay three days in that deplorable condition, from which he hath now been rescued (though, I fear too, late) by your humanity and benevolence.

She shed a flood of tears at the conclusion of this mournful tale, which did not fail to affect the whole audience; especially Serafina, who assured her, that whatever should happen to her husband, she might depend upon finding favour and protection, provided her conduct should correspond with her professions. While this grateful creature kissed the hand of her kind benefactress, Fathom uttered a groan, began to stir in the bed, and with a languid voice called upon Elinor; who instantly withdrawing the curtain, presented the whole company to his view. He had now retrieved the use of his perception, by the operation of the blisters, which began to torture him severely; he looked around him with amazement and affright; and, distinguishing the three persons against whom the chief arrows of his fraud and treachery had been levelled, he concluded that he was

now

now arrived at the land of departed souls, and that the shades of those whom he had so grievously injured, were come to see him tormented according to his demerits.

Fraught with this notion, which was confirmed by the bodily pain which he felt, and the appearance of the clergyman and Joshua, whom he mistook for the ministers of vengeance, he cried in a tone replete with horror, 'Is there no mercy, then, for penitence! is there no pity due to the miseries I suffered upon earth! Save me, O bountiful Heaven! from the terrors of everlasting woe; hide me from these dreadful executioners, whose looks are torture!—Forgive me, generous Castilian!—O Renaldo! thou hadst once a tender heart!—I dare not lift my eyes to Serafina! that pattern of human excellence, who fell a victim to my atrocious guilt; yet her aspect is all mildness and compassion!—Ha! are not these the drops of pity! Yes, they are tears of mercy: they fall like refreshing showers upon my drooping soul! Ah, murdered innocence! wilt thou not intercede for thy betrayer at the Throne of Grace!'

Here he was interrupted by Melville, who, with a grave and solemn air, pronounced, 'Great hath been thy guilt, unhappy Ferdinand, and great have been thy sufferings. Yet, we come not to insult, but to alleviate thy distress. Providence hath kindly defeated thy dire intentions; which we therefore now forgive, and transmit to oblivion, whether it be thy lot to yield up thy spirit immediately, or to survive the dangerous malady with which thou art at present overwhelmed. Suffer not thyself to despair, for the mercy of Heaven is infinite; and submit to the directions of this worthy gentleman, who will employ his skill for thy recovery, while we shall take care to furnish thee with necessary attendance. As too much speaking may be prejudicial to thy health, I dispense with a reply, and exhort thee to compose thyself to rest.' So saying, he drew the curtain, and the company retired, leaving Fathom intranced with wonder.

The next step which Renaldo took for the benefit of this wretched penitent, was to send for the apothecary, with whom he left a sum of money to

be expended for the convenience of Fathom and his wife; then he laid injunctions upon the physician to repeat his visits; and that gentleman, together with the clergyman and Joshua, taking leave of the others till next day, the count set out with the ladies and his father-in-law, to the house where they had lodged the preceding night.

The reader may well imagine the conversation of the evening turned wholly upon the strange occurrence of the day, which seemed to have been concerted by supernatural prescience, in order to satisfy the vengeance, and afford matter of triumph, to the generosity of those who had been so grievously injured by the guilty Fathom. Though not one of them would say that such a miscreant ought to live; yet all concurred in approving the offices of humanity which had been performed, and even endeavoured to find specious pretexts for vindicating their compassion. Don Diego said it would ill become a transgressor like him, to withhold his forgiveness from a sinner who had wronged him. Madam Clement appealed to the approbation of Heaven, which had undoubtedly directed them that way, for the purpose they had fulfilled. Serafina observed, that the crimes of the delinquent were obliterated by his sorrow, misery, and repentance. Renaldo honestly owned that, exclusive of other reasons, he could not deny himself the luxurious enjoyment of communicating happiness to his fellow-creatures in distress: and each fervently prayed that their charity might not be disappointed by the death of the object.

While they amused themselves in these discussions, Fathom, after having lain some hours silent, in consequence of Renaldo's advice, could no longer suppress the astonishment of his mind; but, addressing himself to his wife, 'O Ellenor!' said he, 'my delirium is now past: though I still remember the phantasies of my disordered brain; among other reveries, my imagination was regaled with a vision so perfect and distinct, as to emulate truth and reality. Methought Count De Melville, Don Diego De Zelos, and the divine Serafina, the very persons who are now crying before the Throne of Heaven for vengeance against the guilty Fathom, stood by my bedside, with looks of pity and forgiveness; and that

' that Renaldo spoke peace to my de-
 ' spairing soul. I heard the words dis-
 ' tinctly: I retain them in my memory.
 ' I saw the tears trickle from Serafina's
 ' eyes; I heard her father utter a compas-
 ' sionate sigh; and should actually believe
 ' that they were personally present, had
 ' not I long ago seen with my own
 ' eyes, the funeral procession of that
 ' young lady whose wrongs God par-
 ' don! and were I not convinced that
 ' such a meeting could not be effected
 ' without the immediate and miraculous
 ' interposition of Heaven. Yet every
 ' thing I now see, corresponds with the
 ' words of Renaldo, which still sound
 ' in my ears. When my perception
 ' forsook me, I lay in the most abject
 ' misery, among straw; and thou, poor
 ' injured innocence, wast naked and
 ' forlorn. Now, I find myself reposed
 ' in a warm, easy, comfortable bed: I
 ' see around me the marks of human
 ' charity and care; and the favourable
 ' change in thy appearance, glads my
 ' poor dejected heart. Say, whence
 ' this happy alteration? Do I really
 ' awake from that dream of misery in
 ' which we have continued so long? or
 ' do I still utter the extravagant ravings
 ' of a disordered brain?'

Elinor was afraid of imparting at
 once all the particulars of the happy
 change he had undergone, lest they
 might leave a dangerous impression upon
 his fancy, which was not yet duly com-
 posed: she contented herself, therefore,
 with telling him that he had been oblig-
 ed to the humanity of a gentleman and
 lady, who chanced to pass that way by
 accident, and who, understanding his
 deplorable case, had furnished him with
 the conveniences which he now enjoyed:
 she then presented to him, what the doc-
 tor had directed her to administer; and,
 admonishing him to commit his head
 to the pillow, he was favoured with a
 breathing sweat, fell fast asleep, and in
 a few hours waked again altogether cool
 and undisturbed.

It was upon this occasion that his wife
 explained the circumstances of that visit
 which had redeemed him from extre-
 mity of wretchedness and the jaws of
 death; upon which he started up, and
 throwing himself upon his knees, ex-
 claimed, 'all-gracious Power! this was
 ' the work of thy own bounteous hand;
 ' the voice of my sorrow and repen-
 ' tance hath been heard. Thou hast

' inspired my benefactors with more
 ' than mortal goodness, in my behalf;
 ' how shall I praise thy name! how
 ' shall I requite their generosity! O I
 ' am bankrupt to both! yet, let me not
 ' perish until I shall have convinced
 ' them of my reformation, and seen
 ' them enjoying that felicity which
 ' ought to be reserved for such consum-
 ' mate virtue.'

Next day in the forenoon he was vi-
 sited by the physician, whom he now
 recollected to have seen at the house of
 Madam Clement; and, after having
 thanked that gentleman for his huma-
 nity and care, he earnestly begged to
 know by what means Serafina had been
 preserved. When he was satisfied in
 this particular, and given to understand
 that she was now happy in the arms of
 Renaldo, 'Blessed be God!' he cried,
 'for having defeated the villainy of him
 ' who sought to part such lovers. Dear
 ' Sir, will you add one circumstance to
 ' your charity, and bear to that happy
 ' couple, and the noble Don Diego, the
 ' respects and the remorse of a sincere
 ' penitent, whom their compassion hath
 ' raised to life. I have been such a
 ' traitor to them, that my words deserve
 ' no regard. I will not therefore use
 ' professions. I dare not hope to be
 ' admitted into their presence. I am,
 ' indeed, ashamed to see the light of
 ' the sun; how then could I bear the
 ' looks of that injured family! Ah, no!
 ' let me hide myself in some obscure re-
 ' treat, where I may work out my sal-
 ' vation with fear and trembling, and
 ' pray incessantly to Heaven for their
 ' prosperity.'

The physician promised to represent
 his contrition to the count and his lady;
 and accordingly proceeded to their ha-
 bitation, where he repeated these ex-
 pressions, and pronounced his patient
 out of danger; so that their thoughts
 were now employed in concerting a
 scheme for his future subsistence, that
 he might not be exposed by indigence
 to a relapse in point of morals. Renaldo
 being still averse to any personal inter-
 course with such a wretch, until he
 should give some undoubted proofs of
 amendment, and as yet afraid of in-
 trusting him with any office that re-
 quired integrity, resolved, with the ap-
 probation of all present, to settle him
 in a cheap country in the north of Eng-
 land, where he and his wife could live
 comfortably

comfortably on an annuity of sixty pounds, until his behaviour should entitle him to a better provision.

This resolution was just taken, when Joshua arrived, with a gentleman whom he introduced to Don Diego as the secretary of the Spanish ambassador. After the first compliments, this stranger told the Castilian, that he waited upon him at the desire of his excellency, who would have come in person, had he not been confined by the gout; then he put into his hand a letter from the court of Madrid, written by a nobleman of Diego's acquaintance, who informed him that Don Manuel De Mendoza having made away with himself by poison, in order to avoid the disgrace of a legal conviction, his catholic majesty was now convinced of Don Diego's innocence, and granted him leave to return and take possession of his honours and estate. This information was confirmed by the secretary, who assured him that the ambassador had orders to make him acquainted with this favourable decision of the king. The Castilian having first acquitted himself in the most polite terms to the secretary and the Jew, who, he said, had always been a messenger of glad tidings, communicated his happiness to the company; and this evening concluded the third day of their rejoicing.

Next morning, Don Diego went to visit the ambassador, accompanied by Joshua and the secretary; while the physician, repairing to the habitation of Fathom, signified, by Renaldo's direction, the resolution which had been taken in his behalf; and the patient no sooner heard his doom, than lifting up his hands, he cried, 'I am unworthy of such tenderness and benevolence!' while Elinor shed a flood of tears in silence, unable to give utterance to her grateful thought. Melville's bounty having so far transcended her most sanguine hope.

The Spaniard having paid his devoirs to his excellency, returned before dinner; and, in the afternoon, desiring a private conference with Serafina, they retired into another apartment, and he expressed himself to this effect. 'You have contracted, my dear child, an habit of calling Madam Clement your mother; and, doubtless, by her maternal tenderness and regard, she hath acquired a just title to the appellation;

'yet, I own, I would fain strengthen it by a legal claim. I no sooner retrieved my daughter, than I gave her away to the most deserving youth that ever sighed with love. I rejoice in the gift which secured your happiness; but I left myself in a solitary situation, which even the return of my good fortune cannot render easy and supportable. When I revisit the castle of Zelos, every well-known object will recal the memory of my Antonia, and I shall want a companion to fill her place, and to sympathize with me in that sorrow which will be derived from my remembrance. Who is there so worthy to succeed your mother in the affection of Don Diego, as she who interests her love for Serafina, and resembles her so strongly in every virtue of the sex? similar attractions will produce similar effects. My heart is already attached to that good lady; and, provided Serafina shall approve of my choice, I will lay myself and fortune at her feet.'

The fair countess replied with an enchanting smile, that before this declaration, she had with pleasure perceived the progress which Madam Clement had made in his heart; and that she did not believe there was a person upon earth better qualified to repair the loss he had sustained; though she foresaw one obstacle to his happiness, which she was afraid would not be easily surmounted. 'You mean,' answered the Castilian, 'the difference of religion, which I am resolved to remove by adopting the protestant faith; though I am fully satisfied that real goodness is of no particular persuasion, and that salvation cannot depend upon belief, over which the will has no influence. I invest you therefore with the charge of declaring my passion and proposal, and empower you to satisfy her scruples with regard to the religion which I now profess; and which I shall not openly relinquish, until I shall have secured, in this country, effects sufficient to screen me from the ill consequences of my king's displeasure.'

Serafina undertook this office with pleasure, because she had reason to think his addresses would not be disagreeable to Madam Clement; and that same night made the count acquainted with the nature of her commission. Nor was her

her expectation disappointed; the French lady, with that frankness which is peculiar to virtue and good breeding, confessed that Don Diego was not indifferent to her choice, and did not hesitate in receiving him upon the footing of a lover. As we have already dwelt circumstantially on the passion of love, so as perhaps even to have tired our readers, we shall not repeat the dialogue that passed, when the Spaniard was indulged with an opportunity to explain his sentiments. Suffice it to observe, that the lady's days of coquetry were now over, and that she was too wise to trifle with the time which every moment became more and more precious. It was agreed, then, that Don Diego should settle his affairs in Spain, and return to England, in order to espouse Madam Clement, with a view to fix his residence in this island; where Renaldo likewise proposed to enjoy the sweets of his fortune, provided he could draw hither his interests and connections.

Meanwhile, having for some days enjoyed his bliss with all the fulness of rapture, amidst this small but agreeable society, he shifted the scene, and conducted his dear partner to a ready-furnished house in town; which, together with an occasional equipage, his friend Joshua had hired for the accommodation of him and his father-in-law; who, during his stay in England, failed not to cultivate the mistress of his heart, with the most punctual assiduity. Hitherto Serafina had been as a precious jewel locked up in a casket, which the owner alone has an opportunity to contemplate; but now the count, who was proud of such a prize, resolved to let her shine forth to the admiration of the whole world. With this view, he bespoke such ornaments as befitted her quality; and while the mantua-makers were employed in her service, made a tour among his former acquaintance, and discharged the obligations under which he lay to some who had assisted him in his distress. He did not, however, introduce them to his charming Serafina; because not one of them had formerly treated her with that delicacy of regard which he thought her due; and some of them were much mortified at their neglect, when they saw what a dazzling figure she made in the beau monde.

She was visited by the Spanish and

Imperial ambassadors, and divers other foreigners of distinction, to whom Melville had letters of recommendation; but her first publick appearance was in a box at the opera, accompanied by Madam Clement, the count, and Don Diego: the entertainment was already began; so that her entrance had the greater effect upon the audience, whose attention was soon detached from the performance, and rivetted upon this amiable apparition, which seemed to be some bright being of another world, dropped from the clouds among them. Then did the spirit of curiosity play its part; a thousand whispers circulated: as many glasses were exalted to reconnoitre this box of foreigners; for such they concluded them to be from their appearance. Every male spectator acknowledged Serafina to be the paragon of beauty; and every female confessed, that Melville was the model of a fine gentleman. The charms of the young countess did not escape the eye and approbation of royalty itself; and when her rank was known, from the information of the ambassadors and other people of condition who were seen saluting her at a distance, that same evening a thousand bumpers were swallowed in honour of the Countess De Melville. The fame of her beauty was immediately extended over this immense metropolis, and different schemes were concerted for bringing her into life. These, however, she resisted with unwearied obstinacy. Her happiness centered in Renaldo, and the cultivation of a few friends within the shade of domestic quiet: she did not even forget the concerns of the wretched Fathom and his faithful Elinor, who daily enjoyed fresh instances of her humanity and care; when his fever forsook him, he was supplied with nourishing food for the recovery of his health; and soon as he found himself in a condition to travel, he gave notice to his benefactor, who desired Joshua to settle with him the manner in which he was to receive his allowance, and to pay the first half year's salary per advance.

This affair being adjusted, and the place of his retreat signified, the Jew told Elinor, that she might wait upon the countess before their departure; and she did not fail to make use of this permission. After they had made the necessary preparations for their journey, and

and taken places in the York stage-coach, Mrs. Fathom, cloathing herself in decent apparel, went to the house of Count Melville, and was immediately admitted to the presence of Serafina; who received her with her usual complacency, enriched her with salutary advice, comforted her with hope of better things, provided her conduct and that of her husband should henceforth be found irreproachable, and wishing her peace and happiness, presented her with a box of linen, and twenty guineas in a purse. Such excessive goodness overpowered this sensible young woman to such a degree, that she stood before her in speechless awe and veneration; and the countess, in order to relieve her from the confusion under which she suffered, quitted the room, leaving her to the care of her woman. It was not long, however, before her gratitude broke out in loud exclamations and a violent passion of tears, which all her efforts could not for a good while overcome. By this time the coach was brought up to the gate, for the reception of Serafina, who took an airing every day at the same hour; when Renaldo, leading her to the vehicle, beheld a man plainly dressed standing within the court, with his head and body bent towards the earth, so that his countenance could not be perceived.

Melville, who supposed him to be some unfortunate man come to implore his charity, turned towards him, and asked, with a humane accent, if he wanted to speak with any person in the house. To this interrogation the stranger replied, without lifting up his head, 'Overwhelmed as I am with Count Melville's generosity, together with a consciousness of my own unworthiness, it ill becomes a wretch like me to importune him for farther favour; yet I could not bear the thought of withdrawing (perhaps for ever) from the presence of my benefactor, without soliciting his permission to see his face in mercy, to acknowledge my atrocious crimes, to hear my pardon confirmed by his voice, and that of his accomplished countess, whom I dare not even at a distance behold; and to express my fervent wish for their prosperity.'

Melville, whose heart was but too

tender, could not hear this address without emotion: he recognized the companion of his infancy and youth; he remembered the happy scenes he had enjoyed with Fathom, whose voice had always such an effect upon his ear, as to excite the ideas of friendship and esteem; and he was disturbed by this unexpected meeting, which also discomposed the beautiful Serafina. Renaldo having paused a little, 'It is with pain,' said he, 'I recollect any thing to the prejudice of Fathom, whose future behaviour will, I hope, erase the memory of his offences, and justify what other steps I may take in his favour. Meanwhile, I heartily forgive what is past; and, in token of my sincerity, present my hand.' Which our adventurer bathed with his tears. The countess, whose mind was unison with her husband, repeated her assurances of pardon and protection; at which the penitent rejoiced in silence, while he raised his head and took a parting view of those charms which had formerly enslaved his heart.

Having thus obeyed the dictates of his duty and inclination, he next morning embarked in the stage-coach, with his faithful Elinor, and in six days arrived at the place of his retreat, which he found extremely well-adapted to the circumstances of his mind and fortune: for all his vice and ambition were now quite mortified within him, and his whole attention engrossed in atoning for his former crimes, by a sober and penitent life, by which alone he could deserve the uncommon generosity of his patrons.

While he thus accommodated himself to his new system, Renaldo received letters of congratulation from his sister; who, with the major, had come to Brussels, in order to meet her brother and Serafina, according to his proposal. This intimation being communicated to Don Diego, he resolved to accompany them to Flanders, in his way to Spain. Preparations were made for their departure; the clergyman and physician were honoured with valuable marks of friendship and esteem from the countess, Renaldo, and the Castilian, who was conveyed to Deal by Madam Clement, to whom, at parting, Don Diego presented a diamond ring, as a pledge of his inviolable love.

Here the travellers hired a vessel for

F f Ostend,

Ostend, which they reached in a few hours; in two days more they arrived at Brussels, where Mrs. Farrel and her husband were struck with admiration at the surprizing beauty and accomplishment of their sister-in-law, whom they

caressed with equal tenderness and joy. In a word, all parties were as happy as good fortune could make them; and Don Diego set out for Spain, after they had agreed to reside in the Low Countries till his return.

F I N I S.



